Sidla abantwana bethu.
Youth Political Imaginary in Khutsong, South Africa.

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Molemo Moiloa

Declaration

I declare that this is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the requirements of the Degree of Masters in Social Anthropology, at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

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Molemo Moiloa

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Abstract

This dissertation takes as its point of departure the instances of youth political involvement and political action in the anti-demarcation protests in Khutsong, South Africa, from 2005-2009. The premise of this dissertation is to consider the ways in which political action by young people in South Africa has shifted in response to democratic systems, economic changes and historical political formulations. Through ethnography the lives of young people and their daily experiences are explored to provide cognisance of the everyday challenges of poor black youths today, and to discuss how their political imaginaries have come to respond to contemporary circumstances. The main intent of this research is provide a platform for youth political imaginary in order to contribute to a more nuanced understanding and perhaps afford better responses to youth realities.

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introduction: youth political imaginary in Khutsong

Things never quite feel at ease in Khutsong. Perhaps it's because the ground underneath it is (not so) slowly falling away[1]. Perhaps the unstable roots are felt in its branches. But it's an ordinary township, looks much like most others do. Similar kinds of flat façaded, red roofed houses, some roads tarred and most not. People always, day and night. In cars, on foot, on bicycles. Children play. In the streets, in the yards, on the soccer pitch. And mostly when you knock on the already open door and call 'ko ko', simultaneously entering into someone's house assuming an affirmative response, there is a smiling face, a glass of dangerously yellow 'orange' juice, most often on a tray, and a couch or kitchen chair on which you are expected to sit. Much like any other township.

I had first heard of Khutsong, a township appended to one of many mining towns on the west rand, in my final year at high school when the protests first broke out in 2005. For some reason the press took a particular interest in Khutsong, more than the average burning township – and there were a few. Perhaps it's because that of the three major disputed, recently demarcated municipalities – including Matatiele and Bush Buck Ridge - Khutsong was the only place to erupt in protest. Khutsong had been 'demarcated' or moved from the economically central province of Gauteng, to the more agricultural, significantly less well off North West Province, by the governing political party's (African National Congress or ANC) National Executive Committee, who instructed the National Governmental Parliament. People in Khutsong wanted to stay in Gauteng. What followed was four years of ongoing protest that included the petrol bombings of councillor's homes, of state associated infrastructure such as offices and the library, as well as school boycotts and road blockades. Perhaps most significantly it included an otherwise pretty much unprecedented mass boycott of

1 See R. Morris on the sinkhole in Khutsong which she suggests is a "particularly acute form through which to naturalize violence, for it both represents and sublates the historical relationships between mining, the experience of violence, and something called crime" (2006,64).

elections. They also marched on the Union Buildings, the seat of the president, and took their case to the Constitutional Court.

Of the three municipalities that were demarcated, Khutsong – the only one to burn – was the only one to be returned, in 2009. This is no coincidence. And so Khutsong, for its fierceness, its tenacity, its audacity, and what we might call its victory, has become somewhat notorious, to some heroic. My own interest stemmed from the kinds of protest that got it its reputations, and how evocative of the protest forms of the 1970s – 1990s, a completely different political period in South Africa, they were. Further, the role of young people, not only in the violence - which is usual - but also in school boycotts and political mobilisation – which is a little more unusual – was significant and prominent. It was prominent particularly because of its scale; it was significant because the general consensus amongst older generations, voiced often in the mainstream media, was that young people had given up on politics.

Youth in South Africa

The stats confirm this somewhat "in 1992 15% of youth said that they belonged to a political organisation, 17% said they belonged to a youth organisation and 5% a civic. In 2000 only 4% said they belonged to a political organisation, 7% to a youth organisation and 1% to a civic" (Sachs 2005). In academic literature, the majority of research on South African youth is focused on HIV/AIDS, sexuality and condom use. A basic search on Google Scholar for the term 'South Africa Youth', will bring up 8 out of 10 results on HIV/AIDS, the next in majority will be on violence. Much popular literature, particularly mainstream media functions youth in similar terms of HIV/AIDS, crime, violence and antagonism. When youth discourses turn to politics it is most often in two strains, that of the aggressive radicalism of Julius Malema (now ex) leader of the ANC Youth League – who has been figured in terms of a new ideology wayward from the noble forms of the old

guard ANC[2]. Or the other of an apathetic youth disinterested in politics and history. One of the more recent figurings of a lost and disrespectful youth who no longer understand politics was in fact begun on Facebook, with a re-enactment of the famous Sam Nzima image of the dying Hector Pieterson in the hands of Mbuyisa Makhubu with his distraught sister running beside them, only this time 'Mbuyisa' is grinning with a cigarette in his mouth and 'Hector Pieterson' holds up a bottle of beer in each hand.

The photograph sparked public outcry and was soon picked up in the main stream media. The responses by the now aged photographer of the original photograph, Nzima and Pieterson's sister, featured in the original photograph, Sithole, are both very telling. Both were angered and made statements like; "These young people are portraying the black youth as useless", "They are suggesting that the youth of 2011 are not human beings and that they do not respect their bodies," and "Our youth don't know the history of the Soweto Uprising. They don't understand because they were not there." (Nkosi 2011). Much anger has been expressed over the years over the practice of holding parties to commemorate June 16 1976 in which people of all ages especially dress in school uniform to attend; "in contrast with the dignity and solemn remembrance during the dark days of settler colonialism" (Hlongwane 2008, 58). There is no doubt then, that the perception of contemporary youth politics is that it pales in the shadow of its anti-apartheid predecessor.

Youth in South Africa, as categorised between the ages of 15-34 by the Youth Commission Act of 1996, constitute just over 18 million people in South Africa, 82,4% of whom are categorized black. There are over a billion youth in the world and 85% of these are in developing countries (Braehmer et al 2000; Niebuhr 2002). With Malema foregrounding the positions of youth in South Africa, the ambitious 'long walk to economic freedom' in 2011 and an increase of almost 1

2 There are tomes on the negatives of Malema and his antics of steering off course. The media, particularly print media has much, and much of this has seeped into academia, such as The World According to Malema (2009) by Du Preez and An Inconvenient Youth by Forde (2011).

million more young voters in the 2009 elections than in 2004, an unprecedented youth turnout, youth and their politics are clearly important. Internationally, youth have taken centre in issues of international importance. “Neets” or those “not in employment, education or training”, has become a worldwide term that recognises a growing phenomenon. In the UK in particular, research has gone into the ticking time bomb Neets represent, a single ‘generation’ estimated at costing £35 billion in their lifetime. The term ‘black hole’ has come to reflect how difficult this group of people (effectively outside of institutional access) are to access and research. This was even before the London Riots of August 2011 that saw youth take to the streets looting parts of the city for seemingly ‘no reason’ (Landon and Somaiya 2011), increasing the already existing sense of suspicion of youth in the UK and leaving them ostracised. Youth have been at centre stage of the Arab uprisings across Africa and the Middle East in 2010 and 2011; student protests have rocked Chile, Venezuela, Greece, Italy and Spain in the past two years.

No doubt if we are to understand our world and where it is going, understanding youth and what they think, is vital. As Deborah Durham states, “to pay attention to youth is to pay close attention to the topology of the social landscape – to power and agency; public, national and domestic spaces and identities, and their articulation and disjunctures; memory, history, and senses of change; globalization and governance; gender and class (2000, 113). This research begins with the assumption that youth politics has not simply disappeared, or been buried under the weight of crime and HIV/AIDS, but rather exists in formations and spaces, perhaps not conventional in their makeup but nonetheless very relevant and that need to be carefully considered if we are to understand the complexity of the political subjectivity of post-1994 South Africa.

It is first of all important to understand youth in relation to the complex post-1994 environment they occupy, often referred to as the ‘born frees’ (though most of those referred to this way were actually not), these young people figure their

politics in a period that is strongly influenced by significant growth, wider economic opportunities than would have existed previously, retained race tensions that have taken on very complex forms. In particular, youth politics today must negotiate the unresolved nature of a democratically elected ANC, a 'liberation movement' as the wielders of power and governmentality. Today the role of party politics is deeply intertwined with the role of the state, as many South Africans still associate the ANC with a liberation-era reputation, a sense that their liberation penchants find their home, and their imagined belonging in the party – regardless of or perhaps in complex relation with the fact of a contemporary role as the governors and wielders of state power and often of non-delivery. The boundary between the state as welfare provider and ANC as liberation provider are extraordinarily blurred, and the project of differentiating one from the other, or at least differentiating the claims that one can make on one or the other, is very much a part of contemporary politics today. In the contemporary phase of relatively strong wealth accumulation that has resulted in extremes of inequality, significant (even if not satisfactory) levels of redistribution, development of previously oppressed peoples coupled with dire levels of unemployment within a largely neoliberal economic structure, that youth come to figure a relationship to past roles of youth politics, and determine their own roles today.

The effect of the contemporary environment in shaping discourse around youth has historical grounds. Youth and politics historically also helps us to understand somewhat how we arrive at the present. Politics and generation have often been in conflict. Many scholars have discussed variations on themes of historical South African politics discussing age, kinship, generation and most often rift[3].“Youth”, as defined by Seekings (1993) was historically a term that denoted,

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3 Phil Bonner's *Family, Crime and Consciousness on the East Rand, 1939-1955* (1998); Carton, B. *Blood from your children: Colonial Origins of generational conflict in South Africa.*(2000); Naidoo, K. *"The politics of youth resistance in the 1980s: The dilemmas of a differentiated Durban"* (1991); Michael Cross *Youth Culture and resistance in South African Education: A theoretical review* (1991)*; Youth politics : the political role of AZANYU in the struggle for liberation : the case of AZANYU* by Moloi, Tshepo (2005); Steve Mokwena (1991, 1992); Clive Glaser (1990, 1994, 2000); Monique Marks,(1993, 1995, 2001);Jeremy Seekings' *Heroes or Villains* (1993), *to name but a few.*

very particularly, the political. Unlike “young people”, “youth” as a differentiated term referred not to age limits but rather to political involvement. He states “the category of youth in South Africa is a political rather than a sociological or demographic construct” (Seekings 1993, xi). He adds to this that in the 1970s, the term youth “is almost exclusively used to refer to young African people” (Seekings 1993, xii)[4]. In this stream, “youth” in a South African context is connotatively embedded in anti-apartheid politics, in townships, and of a particular form. Further, unlike the ‘student’ protests, as per the terminology of the time, of 1976/77 and young people involved in student organisations such as the Black Consciousness Movement and black student organisations, “youth was generally reserved for unidentified young people who engaged in morally questionable form of direct action”(Seekings 1993, xi).

This changes in the 1980s as young politically conscious people, who are no longer students, form associations with their peers. These “youth” begin to formulate somewhat different definitions to the faceless marauders of the 1970s, but rather are imbued with a liberatory content. We can see that, similarly to how I have described above youth discourse today, at the time of Seekings’ writings youth were figured in terms of “the apocalyptic and liberatory stereotypes” (Seekings 1993, xi).

Marks’ *Young Warriors* tracks the roles and self-identifications of young political activists in Diepkloof, from the 1980s into the transition (2001). Like Seekings, she figures youth political identity and its formations or constructions within the changing frames of broader political shifts of the country; the state of emergencies, the shifts of bannings and politics ‘underground’, and eventually the changes with the coming of democracy. Like Seekings the formations of youth politics of the 1980’s are described as particularly violent. This included

[4] It is vital to note that Seeking refers here, to the views of white South Africa. Though he does reference some of the positions of how black South Africa, often the family members and neighbours of those same youth, respond, his theoretical premise is definitely based in white positionality. An important thing to consider as it is often the case broadly with research on black and/or poor youth in academia.

youth enforced boycotts, often aggressively ensuring older generations stuck to them, community protection units that fought off various forms of apartheid government allies in violent street clashes, gang fights and necklacing, direct confrontation with the armed forces in the form of stone throwing and petrol bombing. Marks suggests that “a number of Diepkloof youth [she] interviewed clearly believed that there could be no liberation without violence and bloodshed... violence had a cleansing effect since it represented the elimination of what was evil and unsanitary” (2001, 121). This violence was framed by multiple people in multiple ways, never undermining the complexities of the good and bad that violence could represent.

But the sense that violence was taking over youth and townships was strong, as it began to take its toll on ordinary life. Marks refers to examples of local activists who turned to gangsterism. Seekings highlights Khutsong, where “former ‘comrades’ formed the Gaddafis’ gang; scores were reported killed in clashes with the rival ‘Zim-Zims’. Khutsong residents criticised both gangs” (1993, 92). Marks suggests that the line between legitimate violence and ‘tsotsi comrades’ (Seekings 1993, 21) was not necessarily easy to draw, suggesting “there was a strong belief that, without violence, change would be incremental and incomplete. Most youth were sceptical of the [transition] negotiations process – they doubted the sincerity of the apartheid government” (Marks 122). Both scholars end their books asking questions about the role young political activists have in the high rate of criminality and violence in South African society at the time, and effectively today.

The terms by which youth politics have been formed, then, have never necessarily been positive. Even for those who attempt explanations and contextualisation, the picture painted is dark and painful. Today, terms like “young lions” are used to describe the youth of that period whose violent acts, though unfortunate, are seen as necessary for the time. The likes of Hlongwane refer to the “dignity” of June 16 commemorations of that period. The Hector

Pieterson Museum actively rephrases the protest of June 16 as uprisings, rather than as riots as they had been labelled previously. Today, these youth are seen as heroes.

It is not clear then, what is really expected of today's youth in terms of politics. We can be sure, what is not expected is a repetition of the violence of the past. When this repetition happens, there is condemnation of violence and forms of action that are seen as 'inappropriate for a democratic order'. The current phase of political youth action, in both its 'engaged' forms and in its 'apathetic' forms, are framed as failures in reference to the past, but also as problematic in reference to the future.

The case in Khutsong was not easily definable, as flashes of young people, fire and black smoke would enter homes nationally on the television screen every night, and the youth leader of the South African Communist Party (SACP) personally travelled to Khutsong during the protests in response to this. Newspaper headlines such as "Khutsong erupts in flames of fury" (IOL 2005), "Khutsong kids in violent clash" (News24, 2007), "Residents attack mayor's house" (News24 2005) "We protest until Jesus comes" (News 24 2007b), "Rubber bullets fired at Concourt" (News24 2007c). Much of the information at the time was quite sensationalist, placing emphasis on the destruction and violence[5].

5 Another point, that has not been mentioned in the dissertation but is a point of some discussion in Khutsong and by left leaning organisations outside of Khutsong, is that Khutsong is one of the only major townships in Gauteng that did not see the surfacing of xenophobic attacks in 2008. In 2008 the country saw a shocking and wide spread rise of attacks on African foreign nationals resulting in 62 people dead and 1400 arrested for the violence. The main claim for the violence at the time was that foreign nationals were 'taking South Africa's jobs". The Attacks were therefore very much intertwined with issues of unemployment and the fact that foreign nationals were willing to work for a pittance. At the time, Khutsong was in the midst of the demarcation protests and due to the support of foreign nationals in these protests, met in the stadium to agree that they would not take part in the nationwide violence. This may be somewhat explained by the long term foreign, migrant labour from places such as Swaziland, Mozambique and Malawi due to the local mines. Many families in Khutsong have largely naturalised foreign national connections, with South African mothers and non-South African fathers. However, what was more recently evident was the sense of a xenophobia against people from the Eastern Cape, a poverty stricken province on the eastern coast of the country. This emergence had strong undertones of theft of labour, akin to many of the arguments against non South Africans during the xenophobic attacks of 2008. There are some similarities as the poverty levels in Eastern Cape result in labourers willing to work for much less than the locals, much of which feeds of the anger that resulted in the attacks on foreign nationals.

In academia, two recent PhD theses have looked at the role of the demarcation debacle; on participatory town planning by Thabane Rachidi (2007), and on cross border disputes in South Africa generally by Eddy Mavhungo (2011).There have also been a number of reports, predominantly from research centres on violence such as the Centre for Development and Enterprise report on violence during the protests (Bernstein and Johnston 2007) and a report on the marked lack of Xenophobic Violence during demarcation (Kirshner and Phokela 2010)[6]. There have also been a few articles and book chapters such as Botes and Matabetsi (2011) and Buhlungu (2007). Many of these are discussed at some point in the dissertation. Most of these focus on issues of governance, management and coordination and governmentality. I had hoped to look for something else. But where Khutsong has perhaps been most resonant is not in any writing, but in the imaginations of people throughout the country. Khutsong has become synonymous, not so much with a place that took on the state and won, but rather with power, the power of threat, audacity and the crazed anger of a people. In more than one place in the country and particular situation of contestation (labour strikes, service delivery protests etc) the warning has been “we’ll give you another Khutsong” (Trench 2007; Philp 2009)

When I first went to Khutsong I had been hoping to get some answers to a number of questions. From where had young people learnt their particular forms of political protest? How it was that young people had become so particularly involved in protest during demarcation? How young people, in relation to these historical protest forms, had come to understand their politics? And finally in what way an inherited or multigenerational approach to politics and political action might have been developed – more specifically, how the traumas of a political history had come to remain in present society and resurface in a kind of re-enactment of political protest.

6 Predominantly however, the bulk of material on Khutsong looks at much HIV/AIDS research done there, often in relation to the very successful Mothusimpilo project in Carletonville, such as Williams et al, 2000;

While these questions always remained with me, people and place in fieldwork led me in somewhat different directions. I was struck first and foremost by the landscapes young people occupied, and the relatively passive occupation that was typical. I was struck by the silences, the seeming calm, the static waiting that seemed to be the daily norm for so many young people. It was striking particularly because Khutsong had become notorious for chaos, for heated aggression and wild-fire. The Khutsong I entered couldn't have felt further from the stereotype. In time I learnt that there was a bit of both, and that they determined each other.

Conceptual threads: Obligation and the not quite

Perhaps two major conceptual threads that have emerged throughout the dissertation are worth discussing here, as regards 'politics'. As mentioned above, little of what awaited me in producing this research was pre-empted and so much of the theoretical and conceptual strains have been developed through subsequent deliberations on much of the data. A number of themes have emerged including the role of work in society, the role wealth and power play in how young people choose their politics, the complex relations between those who hold power and the politics enacted by those who seek it. Many of these are explored in some detail in their respective chapters. However there are two themes in particular that run through the dissertation that I believe are distinctly worth mentioning.

The first is the concept of *obligation*. This concept runs throughout the dissertation, and at each point it is raised by local people, and in an inwardly conscious manner that reflects that people are thinking about it quite seriously. I am interested in the concept of *obligation* because it affords a somewhat different perspective on the relations of provision at play in South Africa today, which are usually couched in the term 'culture of entitlement'. I think this difference, between the idea of *obligation* and the idea of *entitlement*, is vital because it

provides the possibility of realigning contemporary discourses that are quite seriously problematic. *Obligation* as a concept challenges the discourse around 'entitlement' and requires that we think about the politics of provision more broadly.

Dr Mamphela Ramphele, respected academic and social leader in South Africa is one of many who bemoan the so called 'culture of *entitlement*'. She stated in a 1991 address to the Joint Enrichment Project workshop on marginalised youth that;

> It is also true that it [social disintegration] is not a purely economic problem... Key factors accounting for different responses seem to be the level and pace of urbanisation, the level of perceived deprivation and a sense of entitlement by those perceiving themselves to be exploited. The large disparities between the haves and have-nots in South Africa provide added impetus to the emergence of a culture of entitlement. Social disintegration is a behavioural problem which has the potential of taking over whole communities. (Ramphele 1991)

Another leading personality in South African discourse around race, education and national culture, Jonathan Jansen, recently wrote an article subtitled "Student culture of entitlement will destroy our society" (2012, 1). In it he makes direct reference to what entitlement consists of, some of the everyday demands of those who feel entitled. Once again, entitlement is considered in reference to young people. He states;

> Having worked and led in several different kinds of South African universities, I know for a fact you will find that we have long taken on parental and social welfare duties that would make us the laughing stock of universities anywhere in the world, including

> Southern Africa. Students "demand" that we find food for them, help them to purchase clothes, organise transport for them, arrange their tests outside those academic days that break up a potentially even longer weekend, hire cars and give stipends to SRC members and not compel them to attend classes.
>
> I confess that my wife and I, and most of my colleagues, continue to do many of these things for our students for altruistic reasons. But I am beginning to have doubts about doing everything for students. My own children have to work for their monthly allowances. Even if we can afford to support them, they must learn early on the sanctity of work and the rewards of labour.

The principal concern that surrounds the entitlement discourse is that those who are ‘entitled’ do not understand the balance that constitutes gain and merit. Many young people, the argument goes, want to be rich but don’t want to work hard. Many poor people want free electricity but do not (or wont) recognize that in the greater scheme of things it must be paid for from somewhere, and they do not commit to finding solutions or taking responsibility for its broader repercussions. The sense is that those who ‘demand’ are not willing to sacrifice, to work hard, to play their part, to ‘just pull themselves up by the bootstraps’. And to some extent this cannot be denied, as there is no doubt a trend that has developed in which some people have expectations with little sense of the required resources to fulfill them. This may be for numerous reasons, and extends outside of South Africa and into numerous environments in which a zeitgeist of consumption and excess exists and is a broadly attractive ambition, epitomized in the Reality TV phenomenon and the conspicuous consumption abundant in popular music.

However at a more local level, a post-1994 discourse on rights and access has perhaps resulted in a broad based belief in the customary or obligatory access to state provision, to affirmative action that result in immediate and stunning wealth.

And while rights have been the mainstay of political discourse as an attempt at reformation and rehabilitation of an apartheid illed nation, discourse on the responsibilities that might accompany those rights was less prominent. This lack of discourse on responsibility or requirement is both a cause and consequence of a lack of understanding of broader political systems, a lack of educational intervention in how economies work, and a dearth in the broad based incentive to holistic problem solving.

Yet at the same time we must recognize that the 'entitlement' discourse is embedded in a neo-liberal ideology that views meritocracy over and above historical and contemporary imbalances and socio-cultural difference. This 'by the bootstraps' approach is embedded in an individualized sense of how wealth and relation are produced and is restricted by a western oriented language of value and self-focused economies of affiliation. This limits the extent to which this discourse really accesses the realities of what 'entitlement' might actually represent.

For while there were many people in Khutsong who voiced their sense that they were entitled to certain things; to work, to state provision, to state representation, to middle class luxuries regardless of their political affiliations or community responsibilities, there was always an underlying sense that most people didn't entirely expect to receive those things that they were entitled to. And it is at this point that the 'entitlement' discourse loses some of its grip. For one young man who feels he is entitled, not just to any job, but to a *good* job, and the middle class lifestyle it would afford him, is also well aware that to access it is almost a gamble, that he risks never accessing it at all. Two others who have come to access a ticket to resources, and insist upon their rights to such access, are also deeply conflicted about the authenticity of this access and the possible compromises of their beliefs and integrity that access might risk. Another young man feels entitled to access state land to make a living for himself, he feels that that which belongs to the state belongs to him; and yet concurrently he is

completely aware and has experienced firsthand that the state often leaves its citizens empty handed, cast out onto the peripheries. He knows this just as all of Khutsong knows that even though they believe that the state is obliged to its people, the state can decided at any point that its citizens' views are important, but not definitive, that the state might claim provision but is also capable of taking away.

'Entitlement' thus works on two levels. That of the utopic, and that of the real. On the level of the utopian, there is the expectation of provision, of wealth, of abundant resources for all and the ability to make claims on those who are powerful and the automatic response of gift. However at the level of real, few really believe in the utopian and know rather that they are likely to continue on a path of constant struggle, regular deficiency and recurrent resuscitation. This is the use of a type of language that invests in the utopic; from which they communicate an attempt at a new state of being, make claims for assistance and remain motivated about possible futures. This utopic and the real are not two contradictions, but rather exist codeterminously, they are two parts of a way of maintaining belief and managing contemporary actuality – this is not a 'culture of entitlement' but a mode of functioning.

The premise of Mauss' *The Gift* centres on the foundation of societies made through the reciprocal obligations of gift giving that constitute relationships. Douglas, who writes the forward to a 1990 edition of Mauss' 1950 book, explains that "The cycling gift system is the society." (1990, vii), effectively it is the process of reciprocal obligation through the giving and receiving of gifts that ensure that the society exists, in fact constitutes its existence. For Douglas, Mauss' "theory of the gift is a theory of human solidarity" (1990, ix) in that it serves as the function by which humans come into relation with each other, but even further how human beings come to rely on one another, trust and become indebted to one another.

Mauss insists this is a theory that is almost universal, and the major premise of his argument is to challenge the precepts of the time that saw ‘primitive cultures’ as devoid of economies and backward. He intended then, to prove a relationship of primitive economies to current day economies and explain the legacy of relationship. In order to argue this, Mauss makes gift economy arguments from numerous parts of the world including (Native) America, Melanesia, Europe and India. He continues to attempt to parallel the relations of the gift economies to a more familiar ‘contemporary’ capitalist economy toward the end of his argument. In all cases, he insists, exist the premise of a gift economy in which people are obliged to give and receive gifts. Gift giving and the social obligation to give gifts then, is almost universal (Mauss 1950).

If as according to Mauss, all cultures have some kind of obligatory gift giving system that works as the constitutional factor of social relations, “The cycling gift system is the society” (Douglass, viii), then entitlement is not an anomaly. In fact it is a call on social connectivity, a demand for real and equal relationship. If as argued above, we consider the relation between utopic and real senses of the gift, and of reception, and see this at the level of a mode of functioning, then we might understand how ‘entitlement’ might be the basis of a social contract that constitutes society.

To begin with, we might do away with the discourse of ‘entitlement’ and understand it as a completely different concept; that of *obligation*. The state has an obligation to serve its citizens, work places have an obligation to afford young workers the place to grow and earn well, political systems are obligated to young activists who seek to earn a living and access the resources from which they might put their ideological affinities into practice. This *obligation* is relational; it is what ties citizens to their states, owners to producers, ideology to practice.

This *obligation* goes a step further, as Bongani, a 27 year old young man from Khutsong, states:

> We must be obliged to something, and positive things. We are just living life, we're just living. People are trying to live to the fullest at a very fast pace. Life is obviously fast now. And it is something else you know. Twice as much acceleration. So we die early, we die young in a very immeasurable amount.

Bongani explains that without being obliged to something and something positive and constructive, 'we' are unable to function as productive socialized beings. Rather those that hold no ties live life too fast (become reckless) and die faster. And according to Bongani, this is happening on a large scale as too many people have no obligations. Bongani reiterates Mauss' point, that the gift and the obligation to give gifts ensure ties to a social function. What Bongani states above, is that if he is not given, he cannot give. Because he has no chance to be obliged. As he has not been given, he has nothing with which he might be obligated, never mind with which he might repay that obligation. If he is not obligated, he is not connected to his society. Rather he is left to self destruct. Others in Khutsong are left abandoned to the peripheries, others in Khutsong are removed from the being "part of the influences that inform our conditions".

What Bongani points to goes far beyond entitlement, it goes beyond a project of reciprocity, beyond individual economies of affiliation. Rather this *obligation* is multi-channeled; it implicates a network of social *obligation* that is widely inclusive. And in each example in Khutsong there is a sense that the *obligation*, the gift, would be passed on; in the form of a brother paying for his sibling's school fees, or sons repairing their mother's gate, or a community that would vote for a particular party. These relationships go beyond simple provision, but are based on principles of mutual respect, a sense of the equality of powers of state and citizen. They exist on the level of self dignity, an investment in lives that are more than what oppressed predecessors were ever able to access, or an investment in a life based on legitimate productivity instead of crime.

Again and again, people are searching for their *obligation*. Many in Khutsong have found it, in journalism, in church, in volunteer programs, in self employment. Others still search in politics, in work, in ideology, in unaffiliated political organizations. Many like Bongani seem to have already given up. But most remain searching. At core is a negotiation of who is obligated to whom, and how much can one expect? The space of *obligation* is what is most contested, for it is this place at which people negotiate the terms of their *obligation* and, it would seem, most often come to conflict.

It is perhaps this conflict, or an ingrained and inevitable mismatch between *obligation* and delivery, that results in a relationship between the mutually obligated that can be described as apprehensive or strained. The reality is not the utopic. Ferguson (2006) would argue this as the limitations that have wracked what he refers to as the moral undertones of socialism in Africa. Ferguson, who perhaps simplistically argues that “wealth in Africa has long been understood as first of all a question of relations among people” (2006, 82), suggests that corruption in African states and the “scientific capitalism” of neoliberal international economic agencies such as the World Bank (that often go hand in hand with corruption) have come to undermine and sever the assumed morality of how wealth functions socially, making rare what he argues as a perceived “good government”. This breakdown in relations has left citizens at odds with their normative expectations, estranged from those with whom they should hold relations, and seeking alternative modes of relationship to compensate. I would suggest that this renegotiation can be found in the concept of the *not quite*.

The *not quite* is a state of functioning that is a response by people to the consistent failures of society (and often of selves) to meet their social obligations. The *not quite* is the middle ground between full involvement and complete apathy, a kind of threshold or grey space that is not one or the other. There are many examples of people in Khutsong, particularly young people, choosing to

straddle a middle ground between commitment and disengaging (perhaps in choices made, sides taken, approaches chosen, statements made, connections claimed), that affords them space to make claims to either side depending on the particular issue at hand. The space of the *not quite* is that middle ground, that ambiguity, the possibility for shape shifting, and a liminal space that one might slip in and out of relatively easily.

Perhaps it is simply routine that relations can never be complete, that we enact a space of the in-between rather than at polemic sides of a commitment. But the state of the *not quite* is evident throughout the relations that exist in Khutsong, particularly amongst young people. This *not quite* repeats itself time and again in various forms particular to the context or the situation at hand but remains a space of negotiation that affords its occupier some recourse.

This space of the *not quite* is not always by choice, as people are cast out onto the peripheries, not included due to political persuasion, economic discretion or bureaucratic whim. It is from this place of the periphery that people are immediately excluded for the clear and the steadfast, immediately placed in a precarious space. This precarity weaves its way though all aspects of life on the periphery, becoming a part of all and everyday action and relation. The *not quite* becomes the common.

Most indicative of this is the complex dance of relations that Khutsong enacted in relation to the state during demarcation. Effectively at stake in demarcation was an estrangement from the centre that is Gauteng Province (the cultural and economic centre of South Africa) and, in terms of service delivery, the likely estrangement from adequate state provision. At stake in demarcation then, was the state moving further away and severing the ties of social *obligation* that might constitute the expectations of a gift society. In order to make this point, people in Khutsong used numerous tactics of relational connection between itself and the state which are discussed throughout this dissertation. One of the most striking

versions of this was the use of elections. In the local elections of 2006, Khutsong denied any sense of legitimate representivity through not electing representatives, “of the 29 540 registered voters, only 232 voters turned up to vote, and 12 of those ballots were spoiled” (Ndletyana 2007, 107).

This is vital as the vote had come to symbolise the ultimate mode of democratic representivity; particularly the snaking queues of multiracial voters in 1994 came to represent the miracle that was the transition from apartheid. Khutsong uses this very powerful symbol of democracy (and legitimacy) after official apartheid, to highlight the lack of democracy they felt the state was imposing by making decisions for constituents despite their objections. But even more significant is that Khutsong was effectively arguing for inclusion, for a closer relationship with the state that would honour the obligatory relations of provision – in this case specifically the gift of the vote for the gift of state provision. And yet Khutsong was also arguing against a state that imposed itself upon a society, engaging in a relationship of enforced terms. To make this point, Khutsong brings the state into close relationship by refusing to vote. Pulls the state closer by pushing it away.

This is clear when in 2009, at the encroachment of the national elections and with threats of another boycott mounting, the ANC declared a return of Khutsong to Gauteng. Khutsong repaid this gift by largely returning to the polling stations and contributing to the voting of the ANC into a majority leadership. This is a good example of how the *not quite*, a murky area of connection and disconnection, pushing and pulling, begets positive outcomes from a position of relative lack of substantial negotiating power.

Throughout this dissertation the *not quite* resurfaces. First as a claim to work, but then not any work. This is a claim to access but also a retreat from it, should it not suffice as is argued in chapter one. Or demanding inclusion in the state, but concurrently refusing the state’s domination in chapter two. Or to engage political parties and remain connected but at the same time remain unaffiliated, at a

distance in chapter four. Or the choice to engage in ones community politically but remain outside of the party political realm, to attempt alternative modes of organization and mobilization in chapter five.

This push and pull, in but out, a part but also apart is an approach to roles and relationships that determines relation but only tentatively. It allows for the space for retraction, reentering on a different cue, renegotiating in different languages, revisiting when most conducive. It can therefore be a tool, a way of reigning in power and making the most of what resources one has. Like a young man who applies for a learnership, but pays a bribe for a job at the same time in chapter one. Or Khutsong, who abstain from voting in order to make their voices heard in chapter two. It can also be a way of remaining independent, retain some sense of separation, calling on the relationship only when necessary, like the Young Communist League (YCL) leaders who occupy contradictory lifestyles and ideologies all at the same time in chapter four. Or the young activists who refuse to be associated with a political party, and choose rather to affiliate with 'socialism' in chapter three.

But it can also be a process of 'using the master's tools', as largely disempowered peoples negotiate relations of power using the practices, rhetoric and trends of the powerful. This includes rights rhetoric, voting, assertions of history and memory, claims on governmentality and democracy, the usage of multiple levels of affirmations of dues and virtues, of legitimacy and belonging. This place of the *not quite* is not always by choice, but it is taken on as a mode of operation that might be used powerfully, with great effect.

This place, this tool, this mode of functioning becomes in and of itself a state of being. At once made for them but at the same time made by them. It is a response to being cast out onto the margins, of being forced to eke out your belonging on the edge. But it is also a chosen mode of operation, a place of privilege as it affords flexibility, resources which may be maneuvered at will,

when necessary. The *not quite* becomes a place from which one might grasp at some level of access, of bargaining power, but retain the ability to retract or withdraw, should it be necessary. Or to define the rules independently, to act outside of the bounds (or in alternative bounds) as far as is possible.

Chapter Outline

Each chapter takes as its point of departure a moment, event, conversation or individual, from which broader ideas can be discussed. The intention, as mentioned above, is to ground all concepts and theories in local speculations and discourses that are happening on the ground. Over and over again, interviews and ordinary discussions took the form of complex, self reflective and considered interrogation of our current state, of individual phases of thought and ways we interact. This considered nature meant that in each case it is someone else's contemplations, someone form Khutsong's views from which I have elaborated in this dissertation. And this indebtedness should be acknowledged. In each chapter too, an attempt has been made to capture in as thick a description as is possible, the happenings, environment and everyday goings on that are the very fabric from which people have come to figure themselves.

Chapter one seeks to afford the reader a tangible sense of place, to situate the reader in order to grasp the everyday circumstances in which youth come to figure their politics. It maps some of the places, spaces and tracks through which young people pass and come to a point of almost un-budging stasis. It is this negotiation of movement and stillness that is the core of the chapter, through a young man Bafana, who attempts to make sense of where he is stuck, and what his options are to move, in terms of work, belonging and ambition. Bafana and some of the other young people introduced in this chapter exist in a complex relationship with *obligation*, obligation to themselves in terms of what they will accept or aim for in the broader scheme of employment. Obligation from the world/employers/the state to ensure that good work is accessible and given to them. Bafana, and another young man Bongani, both make clear and conscious

claims on the obligations of society upon them, to be working, productive, constructive members of society and the effects this kind of term by which one finds their belonging, has on them.

Most interesting in this chapter perhaps, is while relaying and lamenting the extent to which unemployment affords them lack of resources but also of access, legitimacy and belonging, there is also a complex negotiation by which these young people decide on what terms they will engage this. The political, in particular voting, is brought up over and again in relation to work and accessing it and it's their ultimate co-determinacy. And both Bafana and Bongani make claims for tools of access that play to the social expectations of politics and work. But they also remain ambiguous about the extent to which they want to engage these expectations and to what extent they aim to create their own. Both Bafana and Bongani remain in a space of the *not quite* as regards the role work should play in their lives, and the lengths they will go to 'just work' and therefore be included, and the boundaries at which they stop to demand the things that they want.

Chapter two explores the ways in which people in Khutsong have come to figure their relations to the state. Beginning with a brief introduction to Dumisani, a young entrepreneur and self-proclaimed former criminal, this chapter considers the ways in which ordinary people clutch at currencies of merit, legitimacy, representivity and democracy. It looks in particular at the demarcation protests and the tools and techniques of governance and democracy that people in Khutsong have chosen to claim and wield. Most specifically it looks at the nature of this wielding, that seems to swing both ways, both in favour of state intervention and governmentality, but also against the state and its power, to reclaim their own.

This chapter is perhaps the most overtly focused on the demarcation protests and functions as a historical ethnography of an event, but also considers the

contemporary re-imaginings and reactions to these acts of grand politics and protest that exist in the not so grand every day. It is also the one chapter that is less focused on the particular positions and conditions of youth, but rather looks at the community as a unit. It does however draw out the instances in which the specifics of youth conditions might enact and react to the very same discourses and experiences that the community as a whole had engaged in previously. This chapter employs theory that is not a perfect fit, attempting to find the midpoint between various strains of state and power theory that might speak to the very particular conditions and modes of action that where the demarcation protests. Theory in this case falls short of the specificity of the local, where western state theories have gaping holes and postcolonial theory attempts generalisations that do it an injustice. Perhaps the biggest mismatch is in the ways in which the community of Khutsong grappled with concepts of *obligation*, in particular the state's *obligation* to its people. For in this case, we have a people demanding the overarching involvement of the state, attempt to bring the state closer, reign it in *so that* it may exert its power. This seeming contradiction is difficult to determine and once again, remains in the space of the *not quite*, a coterminous motion of pulling and pushing.

Chapter three considers the ways in which particular political forms have come to function in Khutsong, particularly in terms of a history of youth political action. The frames of political formation of the community as a whole are considered in relation to civic formations and bureaucratic resistance. However in relation to youth the focus is predominantly on violence and overtly public forms of political action, which seem to have constituted its heritage and its more recent formations. While not a holistic interrogation of the roles and reasons for violent action, this chapter seeks to engage some of the elements of how violence has come to function in Khutsong today. In particular it explores the ways in which violence has come to occupy an ambiguous or *not quite* position.

This is discussed largely through the descriptions of protest by two young women who were actively involved from 2007. Analysis is made of their language, positions and tones to discuss a seeming ease that they, and many other young people, have in engaging and speaking of violence. The demarcation protests never actually resulted in the loss of any lives, and the casualties of bodily harm were relatively minor considering the extended period under which this action took place. However Khutsong remains synonymous with violence and the ways in which this violence has come to be understood more broadly, and they ways it is imagined internally, are pivotal for understanding protest form and youth political action.

Chapter Four discusses the role that politics plays over and above ideological standpoint. Beginning with a young man wrestling with himself and his principles on whether to join a political party that might afford him greater access to resources and a possible career, this chapter explores through a tangled but largely self exploratory discussion, the negotiation of ideology, legitimacy, consumerism and expectation. This is explored through Jabu and Musa, who are deeply involved in a circuitous project to attempt to explain the Tripartheid Alliance to themselves, and in particular to attempt to explain where radical left ideology belongs in contemporary South Africa, if at all.

Jabu and Musa are attempting a project of resolving or synthesising the enmeshed and very difficult relationship between their ideology and their lifestyles. They are struggling with their obligations to themselves and their personal doctrines. They are struggling with the point at which this meets their obligations to their communities, those obligations that their communities expect and those that they have chosen to manoeuvre. Those that they have chosen are intermingled with obligations to family, to ambition. But too, are gripped by the obligations to party, to municipality and bureaucracy. They both speak openly and in continuous negotiation, about the place of *obligation*, where is this place? And where in it do we stand?

Currently they move in and out of it, retranslating, redefining in critical and acute attempts to place all their obligations evenly. They juggle terminology, commitments and positions to attempt clarity. They exist in this *not quite* state, shifting around what is clearly a compromised state of being. They grasp at memory, at history, to attempt some semblance of a period at which things might have made sense, might have been cut and dry. And so, their politics remains *not quite*, not quite now, not quite then, but somewhere in the middle and shifting back and forth. It is this kind of politics that many of the people who come to the fore in chapter five, seek to escape. Chapter five functions in the forms of windows, short snippets into the lives of a few, vaguely related people who have sought to exit themselves from the grand politics of demarcation, are seeking alternative modes of politics to find themselves new channels through which they might change or affect their environments. Some are more effective than others, and action becomes the conceptual point around which some engage and others become mired in fear. These young people all feel obligated to their communities and are passionate about the roles they can play for making a difference. And each has, largely in discussion with the politics of demarcation protest, its forms, its language, its approach, sought places of refuge and political frames of functioning.

Through religion, through music, through non-governmental organisations of different forms, young people engage their politics in ways that respond to the realities of their spaces of existence. They engage the realities of their resources, engage the realities of adult example and non-example, they engage the pains and disappointment that mainstream politics have afforded, they engage the conditions of their community and the realities of what's truly possible to do considering their ultimate state of lack. They remain slippery, focused on community but multifarious in their approach, not quite one kind of thing, not quite another. They use variant tactics, seek multiple points of access and resources, and move from point to point.

Literature on youth

I had initially been interested in perhaps more abstract and conceptual frameworks of how youth politics might be significant. However the main thing that field work, and spending so much time in Khutsong with some of its people, had helped me see was that the tangible, the real and the concrete were deeply vital and that the political imaginary of youth was ingrained in the actual. A descriptive project is born from this realisation. A project based in the voices of young people and their positions is developed from this. A political imperative to represent fully, young people as the active and nuanced responders to their environments and situations that they are, is constructed from this. In the end I believe attempting this, is a far more worthwhile project, and far richer.

This intuition was made concrete when considering the range of contemporary research available on youth, African youth and South African youth in particular. It is wide and variant and deals with many subjects and themes. However there seems to be a bias toward discussing youth within the parameters of wider networks of age. Youth too often, are viewed within the guise of a transient phase of arrival, for which the telos is adulthood. What this often results in, is a discourse on youth that doesn't take their immediate circumstances and responses to circumstance at face value – as ideas, motivations and consideration in and of themselves, but rather within culturally constructed relationships, always cognisant of age hierarchies. This is especially the case in anthropology, in which youth are most often discussed in relation to coming of age processes, rituals of adulthood, 'cultural' kinship relations, sex and reproduction. Too often, if youth positions on these topics are even fore grounded, and often they are not, they are considered in relation to cultural constructions and restrictions rather than as independent agentive positions. This is the case for Caplan, who considers the relationship between a mother and daughter on Mafia Island, reading the daughter predominantly in reference to her differences to her mother. Or Talle who considers the relations between Maasai

‘ilmuraan’ and their mothers, a critical enquiry into age hierarchy, coming of age processes as adult imposed and cultural constructions of expectation (Aguilar 1998).

These kinds of explorations can still be useful, for figuring youth in relation to their contexts and relations. One such example is a historical ethnography of the turn of independence in Guinea and the effects it had on youth position by Jay Straker (2009). Because it is a historical ethnography, written in 2009, it is in fact written from the voices of adults, having been young in 1958 at the time of independence, and therefore not actually foregrounding the voices of youth. Still, its strength lies in the base point from which it develops its focus; that of the agentive and conscious responses of youth toward their political and cultural context, told by older people but with the intention of understanding how they as youth thought, felt and acted with or against the postcolonial state. Still, there is a dearth in the positioning of academic research from the point of view of youth, not bound by cultural predeterminations not of their making, but in response to them, in negotiation with them.

One distinctly good example is that of Jennifer Cole’s discussion on youth in Tamatave (2005), a distinctly anthropological ethnography on work and youth in Madagascar. Cole explores the relatively contemporary phenomenon of the Jaombilo, the young male companions of female sex workers. Discussing the normative cultural structures of age differentiation in relation to kin, work and gender hierarchy; Cole comes to argue that multiple instances of modern shifts in societal norms have resulted in the possibility of the ‘cultural abnormality’ of the Jaombilo, and that even within contextual changes, structural definitions on what constitute a man, or an adult, still stand. The Jaombilo, because he does not own land, does not get married, is in a relationship with a sex worker and does not work, does not constitute a man, and will not as long as he remains in this position. Cole argues that Jaombilo, regardless of age, are perpetual youth. This argument is interesting in the ways in which it negotiates work and youth.

However it is in the *way* she writes, exploring complex and sensitive aspects of structural normativity and the difficulties of economic downturns, which reflect a complex discussion of youth within their own frameworks of age and generation. Though the demeaning of the Jaombilo is largely on the part of older generations, Cole's treatment of the issue as a whole is far more nuanced, begins from the basis of youth perceptions within their context and despite generational cleavages.

Durham (2000) gives us some clues on how to ensure that research on youth recognises popular discourse, critiques some of the seemingly negative aspects of youth engagement and recognises the complexities of how this should be framed in relation to the current discourse. She suggests that to define youth by narrow figures and judgements, or even by age grade or cultural framework; not only limits our definitions to particular contexts (as all contexts have different measurements) but also defines youth in static terms, and attempts to fix definition which inevitably results in constriction, construction and most often patronizing. She suggests that instead of defining the term youth by specific tools of measurement, we should rather frame the idea of youth through the prism of a social shifter. Borrowed from linguistics, "a shifter is a special kind of deictic or indexical term, a term that works not through absolute referentiality to a fixed context, but one that relates the speaker to a relational, or indexical, context ("here" or "us" are such terms)" (Durham 2000, 116). She continues on to indicate that the concept of the social shifter, not only affords us the liberties of contextualising according to the specificities necessary, but that even further, and perhaps most importantly, "it can go beyond immediate relationships being negotiated and draw attention to the structure and its categories that produce and enable encounter" (Durham 2000, 116). This is imperative, as it gives us the opportunity to recognise the specific cases of relational forms of youth identity and youth approach that are deeply and profoundly affected by "the structure and its categories".

For one, she introduces the concept of the *saboteur*, which in the case of Khutsong is perhaps doubly fascinating. She states that,

> caught up in these [the many examples of problematic references to youth] are cross-cutting images of youth as victims of circumstance and the manipulations of older people in power, and also images of youth as unruly, destructive, dangerous forces needing containment. Traversing these notions, youth enter political space as saboteurs; their potential for political sabotage comes from their incomplete subjugation to contexts and co-opters, and their own power for action, response, and subversion in contexts of political definition. (Durham 2000, 113)

This is an immensely important point of departure from which to consider youth in Khutsong as responders to their spaces, the structures they are subject to and the formations they produce in agentive response. Durham's concept of the saboteur is perhaps a slight bit too laudatory, and as we move through this dissertation we will come face to face with the ambiguities of youth politics and the gray shades of noble and righteous sabotage. But the point of an incomplete subjugation is paramount, as young people come to figure their politics in spaces that are both constricted and relatively free, and engage this knowingly.

Methodology

The methodological approaches are quite significantly influenced by the limitations of existing literature mentioned above and attempt approaches that challenge these limitations. The methodology of this dissertation may be separated into the methods and methodological approaches to data collection, and methods and methodological approaches to writing. Some methodological points have been included throughout the dissertation as inferences of ethnographic process or of sampling method. The methodological focus of this

dissertation has been on primary research. Predominantly, the methodology of data collection for this dissertation has been ethnography.

Because ethnography is an approach that focuses on the detail, deeper and closer social observation and interaction, and does this more than sociological surveys or interviews, this methodology has been significantly appropriate for researching young people in ways that challenge the status quo. Effectively, embedded approaches and participant observation are the most apt to directly access the so called 'black hole', and then to ensure in-depth research that accesses young people within their networks and immediate spaces rather than through lenses such as generation etc. that are subject to possible patronizing.

Daily interactions have often offered better senses of people's moods and tones, how they relate to one another and respond to ordinary happenings. Though this dissertation largely uses interviews to structure the discussions, these have been deeply influenced by the nuances of participant observation and ethnographic methods.

I came to Khutsong through an acquaintance and researcher who I accompanied on a field trip as she had some connections with people in the area. The trip's destination was the stadium and while I had managed to find directions to Khutsong, it was more difficult to work out where the stadium was, despite a good look at Google maps – it didn't really zoom in close enough and there was no street view, Google hadn't come here yet. And thus, we were soon lost, driving around Khutsong confused. We stopped by the road side where two men were speaking and I got out of the car to ask for directions to the stadium. One man said, "you are almost there, drive straight down this road, you'll see on your left the vandalised, burned and destroyed thing that once was the stadium. That's it". On arriving at the stadium, with its broken walling and ripped-to-pieces-covering that sheltered the stadium stands, two young men were waiting outside for us. On introduction, one of the young men, a prominent African National

Congress Youth League (ANCYL) leader asked me what I had to offer to people in Khutsong, said that they were hoping for resources and that the community was in dire need.

In both cases, my first two conversations in this community, I was introduced to outspoken, direct and somewhat confrontational people. They were both relatively friendly, not aggressive at all, and yet uncompromising with their words and their points of view. The first man was clearly disapproving of the state of the stadium, most likely of the fact that it had been destroyed in the first place and the fact that any directions in Khutsong would ultimately make reference to something damaged or destroyed, perhaps also disapproving of the fact that since the end of the protests, nothing had been fixed. The second was even more interesting. And I had a number of similar kinds of conversations throughout the year and a half that I spent in and out of Khutsong. This young man was outwardly challenging my role as a researcher, my intentions, my ethics, what I would 'take' and what I would 'give'. Another young man, completely unconnected to any political party, on having heard of me and meeting me for the first time said, "oh this is the one who thinks this is national geographic".

This has had profound effects on my methodology, on how I chose to manoeuvre through spaces, on the extent to which the voices that spoke to me needed to be taken seriously. People were open and expressive, led me from one knowledgeable person to another, and were adamant about being heard and ensuring that I heard everyone. By the end of the research I had interviewed 38 people, including municipal staff, protest leadership, young people both self identified as political and not. The number of people I spoke to in passing or informally is many times more than this. Ethnographic fieldwork was conducted over a two year period, from May 2010. This was approximately a year after Khutsong was returned to Gauteng and this research is therefore quite significant in its immediacy and direct response to the context of demarcation – particularly

as much research directly after demarcation had been largely journalistic, and when academic was brief, primarily interview based and largely with demarcation leadership. The ethnographic approach of this dissertation, that focuses largely on young people and a much wider scope of involvement and non-involvement, has meant a very different addition to much of the material currently available.

The focus was on the particular location of Khutsong. This included numerous extensions of Khutsong, including Khutsong South or Extension 4 which is the newer, post-1994, section of Khutsong (Khutsong was first established in 1958). The predominant focus was on Extension 3 and Skopas. This was largely due to an embedded method where most of my movements followed those with whom I spent time, whose average movements were in particular neighbourhoods in which friends and family networks were based. The central point of my research became the Market, an informal trading store situated on a central crossing in one part of the township. It became the centre because of the people with whom I associated, and the fact that it was their centre too. It was most often where I met people, and from where I would walk or drive to other places and other people. These socio-geographic networks are important, and indicate the extent to which these young people are confined to their immediate locations, the ways in which they feel confident moving and interacting, and the ways in which the locality of Khutsong as a particular place influences their position.

Whilst these networks led me throughout ‘Khutsong proper’, it certainly resulted in a dearth of research in the informal settlements. It is my belief that quite significantly different positions and political affiliations exist in the informal settlements than those of Khutsong proper due to factors such as family income brackets, place of origin and relative recency of movement from there, levels of informal and illegal or semi-legal work, amongst others. Some data leanings would therefore be evident here. This does not however insinuate a bounded totality of Khutsong proper, and some reference is made to certain points in which wider areas of Khutsong, Merafong and Gauteng are made more broadly.

It is important to mention methodologically, that often in this dissertation Khutsong is referred to in the singular, personified and almost anthropomorphically, takes on decision making powers, attitudes and responses, feelings and approaches. This is not to claim that there were singular views about demarcation, or protest forms etc – the very fact of which I hope comes across throughout the dissertation. This is also not a claim to structuralist bounded communities. However it seems necessary to, on the grounds of a majority sense of camaraderie and similar views on the issue of demarcation, utilise some sense of a connective point of correlation that points to a place that is individual in its history and notoriety – which should be recognised – and has at a certain point in time, acted in largely unitary forms for very particular political ends. Khutsong is not a singular place in a singular time, and its political fields are shifting all the time, to an extent that I would not ever claim to fully understand them, however there exists in this place at certain times, specific instances of imagined politics that provide illuminating insight into the trends we see emerging throughout the country. And there exists in this place at specific times a broader, more widespread voice of a particular imagined politics that has few times since, been quite so vocal, quite so clear.

Much of the detail of individuals and the multiple inferences that make up Khutsong, have come through in the interviews. Semi and unstructured interviews and group discussions were conducted. Predominantly these were accessed through snowballing technique[7]. We would sit in my car or someone's room for individual or two person interviews – mostly so that I could get usable audio recordings. Sometimes others we knew who were interested would join

[7] Methodological approach, namely 'chilling on the corner', meant that women were not easily accessible as women often remained individual and in private spaces. Further, there is definitely a lesser occurrence of women in politics in Khutsong. Though certainly present and often in leadership positions, there are certainly less women than men in politics. Within this dissertation women's interviews are only used three times, men's interviews are referenced at least double that. This is not entirely a reflection of the number of women interviewed, as selection for the dissertation minimised the number. This selection might also be seen to stereotype women in non-political roles, as one of these women has left mainstream politics and focused on her personal religious interests, whilst two others make inferences to protest actions more than they do to ideological concepts. I have made every effort to ensure that these women are presented accurately and that their important roles in political action and their radical points of view come across.

and one or two person interviews would be group discussions. Other times a person I asked to interview would gather a number of others with whom they associated or neighbours would come over to visit and be invited to join the discussion. I would differentiate between a focus group and these group discussions, which were often held in back yards, the Market or taverns, where the conversation was not necessarily 'focused' but rather colloquial and often in competition with the loud music blaring out of the tavern sound system or an older brother's bedroom.

The main focus of interviews, especially with young people who were the bulk of the interviews, was the approach of narrative acquisition – the process of obtaining life histories[8]. This process has been especially rich. Firstly it afforded young people a point of entry into the discussion that was familiar and that one could be quite confident about sharing (as opposed to a political standpoint that might be more unfamiliar or unresolved). It also seemed to afford the interviews some weight, as young people came to introduce themselves not through their contemporary action or inaction – as many did very little as terminally unemployed youth not in education. Rather it suggested a system of process, of context and of individualisation. Young people would almost automatically speak of their contexts, their environments and the things that have shaped them. This was particularly useful for politicos who otherwise tended to rely on politics speak, of learned rhetoric and party line speech. An individualised life history brought out the ways in which they came to politics, their processes of learning their politics and often, a very honest account of how they figure themselves as

8 A point which has been markedly absent throughout my research has been any discourse around HIV/AIDS. This is significant, as Khutsong has had some of the highest levels of HIV/AIDS infections . HIV/AIDS has been mentioned a few times, but largely fleetingly. The fullest discussion was held with the leaders of a youth health organisation who conduct training in schools on health issues. However even then, issues of teenage pregnancy and substance abuse seemed to be higher up on their agenda than HIV/AIDS. This absence should be mentioned as it obviously indicates a certain silence around the disease. From material produced around HIV/AIDS in the area and as I have mentioned above there are many cases), there doesn't seem to be a very strong stigma around the disease. And this was not the sense that I got when it was mentioned. However its absence, particularly around an age group for whom it has strong correlation (of the 1500 new infection per day in SA, one third of those are expected to be between the ages of 15 and 24 (Rehle et al, 2007)) must point to some indication of a difficulty with the disease.

individuals who are independent from their politics. The emphasis has been on gaining rich or ‘thick’ data (both in the interviews and the ethnographic work) for the purposes of obtaining detail and complex singularities rather than generalisations. The focus has been on qualitative data collection, particularly in the primary research.

The collection of ‘thick’ data has been extensively translated into thick description throughout the dissertation, particularly in the first chapter, as a distinctive methodology of writing. The methodology of writing throughout this dissertation has been quite carefully considered to address certain theoretical concerns and attempt the development of a dissertation that addresses some of the failings of the literature that has come before it.

The emphasis on thick description in the writing of this dissertation has been to, in some way; give cognisance and tangibility to the environments and everyday struggles that poor black youth face on a daily basis. The intention is to give a strong sense to the reader, of the details and intricacies of what is seen, felt, sensed and embodied in day to day township life, in Khutsong, but also in many other parts of the country. This does not serve to explain away certain issues or concerns, but rather to contextualise them deeply for better understanding. This is in part a response to the dearth of detailed, descriptive writing that pays cognisance to the daily experiences and the realities of the environments in which young people figure themselves. This is important as it is the very real challenges, and in particular the tragic banalities of power and money, waiting and wanting that are at the very crux of how and why young people voice themselves today. As mentioned above, these details are often left out in quantitative data, fleeting generalizations and broad inferences in much of the discourse around youth, particularly on the continent and even more particularly in this country. And this does a disservice to the realities of what youth face today, and a disservice to those who look to understand.

This descriptive project entails a political project of filling in some of the blanks that go unsaid. Part of this project is the usage of life histories. Though these histories were often not as detailed as I had hoped they might be, the political project of affording youth a history that might define their current state and weight their positions is not entirely dissimilar to the project of writing histories for those who were denied them, as was strongly part of the postcolonial project (Ashcroft, 1989; Spivak and Morris 2010). While youth can be defined as a transient phase through which one passes as mentioned above, to afford young people a defining history affords their phase of being some sense of arrival. In the case of radical or violent acts, which might ordinarily be framed within the terms of 'the excitability of youth', these young actors are afforded a certain conscious agency that their histories might inform, that might be afforded a detailed rationality rather than simply pinned down to hormonal, abandoned reactivity. This is a political choice both in the effect it might have on the tone of an interview, and the kind of data collected, but also in the way in which young lives are represented in writing, and the tonal point of view that this dissertation takes.

Some secondary research data has been used. Within the writing of this dissertation, most of the secondary material was determined through an inductive approach, addressing emerging issues from the primary research and developing theoretical grounds from this. Largely emerging issues have been taken from individual and in depth instances from which broader conceptual threads could be drawn. Secondary texts and theoretical application are therefore grounded in primary data collected and these emerge from issues fore-grounded by research informants and participants; to the best of my ability. This has been done predominantly through issues that have been overtly and consciously brought to my attention, but then further through some conversation analysis and critical discourse analysis.

This is largely due to the nature of ethnographic research, which guides that a researcher responds to the data rather than defining it from the start. However it

is also apt to engage youth from a theoretical paradigm that is not restrictive or patronising. Taken predominantly from feminist methodology, this approach to ‘a theory of youth’ attempts to afford the space for multiple inferences and interpretations, without constricting the data to certain methodological frames. As Barbara Christian asks “for whom are we doing what we are doing” and this is the core of what needs to be considered when attributing theory. Is theory negotiated for the purposes of clearer understanding, or as part of a broader attempt at academic contest or aggrandizing? Christian states;

> So my "method," to use a new "lit. crit." word, is not fixed but relates to what I read and to the historical context of the writers I read and to the many critical activities in which I am engaged, which may or may not involve writing. It is a learning from the language of creative writers, which is one of surprise, so that I might discover what language I might use. For my language is very much based on what I read and how it affects me, that is, on the surprise that comes from reading something that compels you to read differently, as I believe literature does. I, therefore, have no set method, another prerequisite of the new theory, since for me every work suggests a new approach. (1987, 62)

Christian, a feminist literary ‘critic’, laments the demand of overarching theory that inevitably constrains the ability to read and fully understand data by force fitting certain precepts and expectations. Christian makes an interesting point about including various aspects of information and experience that contextualise ideas and positions, enabling a wider scope for theoretical application, and the possibility of applying the most appropriate approach where it serves best.

This dissertation adopts a similar approach and therefore, each chapter is quite independent from the next, addressing widely variant aspects in a somewhat compartmentalised function. I hope to achieve a sense that the variant aspects of

this dissertation are independently, vitally important considerations from which entire dissertations could possibly be driven and that these different parts form very complex parts of an incredibly complex whole. This is not to shy away from the theoretical arguments made, which fore grounded here on *obligation* and the *not quite* extend to issues of work, ambition, provision and more broadly, a consideration of conditions under which young people have come to imagine their politics and hence the kinds of manifestations of this politics that are possible.

Definitions and some research focuses

The dissertation deals predominantly with youth and with politics. Both of these terms have been taken quite broadly. Taken somewhat from Durham's discussion on the social shifter and somewhat from Jennifer Cole's discussions on what constitutes youth in Tamatave, Madagascar, and focused on a group of relatively young people from the age of 18[9] to about 35. These limits are largely defined through the peer groups that I engaged with, young people who engaged with each other, rather than a predetermined set of research controls. This takes into account the importance of the networks that exist and are a part of how youth come to function and relate. I am not deeply concerned with the terms under which we might define what 'youth' are. Rather a set of conditions might determine a peer set from whom I am most interested in garnering answers. These would be defined by class, level and experience in employment, level and experience in training, peer association and age. Once again these were not ultimately defining characteristics, but might focus some sense of a condition of familiarity. Chapter 2 in fact deals with wider considerations of local politics that are not determined by or for youth, and so there is certainly a sense that youth and youth politics, exist within broader networks of society and political structure and that at no point are youth considered a bounded category which we might

9 One predetermined factor for data controls and information sourcing was that school (both primary and high) children where excluded. This was because I was interested particularly in the youth who would have taken part in the politics of the demarcation protests. The bulk of which, having been senior students in the years between 2005 and 2009 would therefore most likely already be outside of the schooling programme. It did however include university and college students and graduates, so schooling was not in itself a data control factor.

study apart from their immediate and even distant environments and too, in relation to other generations.

'Politics' too has been taken quite broadly and is once again not considered in the bounded notions of party politics or action that is directly related to political structures such as government or even necessarily directly engaged in power and/or control. This will be elaborated on further throughout the dissertation but it is worth mentioning that while many people in the dissertation refer to politics as regards party focused politics, the description of what politics might constitute is used very broadly throughout the dissertation and is discussed more thoroughly toward the end of the dissertation.

To end off this introduction it is worthwhile mentioning some of the arising matters that might need clarification. Firstly, it should be made clear that this is not a dissertation on demarcation. This dissertation focuses on the lives and musings of young people in Khutsong, how they have come to imagine their politics and in what forms this politics comes to be actualised. Demarcation was the initial point at which my interest in young people in Khutsong was piqued, for it was under these conditions that an active youth became so apparent. Demarcation is also so recent in people's minds, so much a part of how people have come to imagine themselves and their politics, that it would inevitably play a strong part in the dissertation. And this is evident throughout. However there are many details of the demarcation debacle that are not thoroughly written about or considered here. This discussion would not suffice as a thorough discussion on demarcation. It lacks full in-depth research into the Merafong Demarcation forum, little discussion on the multiple channels through which demarcation was challenged, including a protest at the Union Buildings in Pretoria and the case that was taken to the Constitutional Court of South Africa, and lost.

This is done partly because youth can only be considered within their context and demarcation is very much a part of youth in Khutsong's context. This is a matter

that recurs throughout the dissertation, but is especially the case in chapter two, in which young people's lives and realities must be considered within the broader spectrum of the relationships and environments they occupy. As has been discussed briefly in regards to how youth might be defined, it makes little sense to attempt a singular bounded category of youth, and even less sense to insinuate that this category is not deeply intertwined within a broader context, multiple differing generations, political spaces and contestations that are negotiated by all. It is particularly important as discourses on youth attempt to paint 'them' as a group of people who think differently, misbehave, do not understand and are not politically active. Rather, recognising that youth are actors that engage their societies and respond dynamically to its demands, enables us to consider youth as agentive role players in broader spectrums of political society; not lost, not delinquent, not indifferent, but present and already deeply embedded in the fabric of society.

As this dissertation progresses it takes the reader through some of the conditions under which young people are attempting to imagine their politics. As mentioned above this is not a dissertation on demarcation, but demarcation serves as very fertile ground from which to explore the ways in which young people are responding to their environment, and in particular the conditions of South African society and politics post-1994. By the end of this dissertation, and as will be discussed in more detail in the conclusion, I hope to have set the scene for youth political action today, given you, the reader, a sense of the conditions young people are faced with, and attempt to live with as poor, black, peri-urban youngsters. What I hope ultimately to achieve, is a discussion on the changing nature of political action amongst youth today, how some methods and intonations have maintained strong links with the past, but fundamentally how a changing South Africa has required a change in imaginary by its young occupants. Definitively, many young people in Khutsong *are* politically active, but perhaps the terms have changed. On a broader scale, the effects of political action, and the frames under which youth political action is encouraged or

invalidated in Khutsong, has deep ramifications for the way that much of the rest of the country is likely to be. The realities that youth live with today are tough, and require redress, and it is important that we take cognisance of the ways in which young people are telling us so.

1. working, waiting, wanting

The Market is a solidly built two by two and a half metre structure, about a metre and two thirds high. It is made of corrugated iron, timber and retrieved bits of other stuff, two old election posters that make up part of the east facing wall stand out in my mind most. The floor is well swept ground, the deep reddish earth that's found throughout Khutsong. There is an inner large area that takes up most of the space, but little happens there. At the front of this space, facing north, is a platform of two levels about a metre high on which the market wares stand. In front of this is a kind of stoep that has shelter overhead for those buying from the market, and to keep the wares out of the sun. This stoep is only about half a metre wide, held up by three columns, one of which looks to have been a long and substantial branch of a tree with its sub branches sawn off. The man who owns The Market, Petros, usually sits in the entrance-way to the large area, just next to the platform. He sits on an upturned bucket and often spends time in-between sales repacking kip-kips or chips out of bulk bags and into little ones that cost 50c. His hands are often stained red from the colour of the chips. On the platform, sits an assortment of fruit, apples and bananas, and some vegetables such as tomatoes, pumpkins and onions. There are also various sweets, chips, cigarettes, rizzlas and matches. They are all neatly arrayed on multicoloured plates. Below them on the ground, is a white old 5L paint bucket filled high with sparkly clean water, for washing your hands and your fruit should you wish to eat them on the spot. The water is very clean in a place that is otherwise very dusty, and I am surprised each time I use it. Above the platform, from the beam in the ceiling, hang packets of vegetables, often prearranged according to average needs. Three tomatoes and a single onion in some of the packets, quarters and halves of pumpkins in the others. The only thing I have ever seen Petros do in the larger area of the Market is cut pumpkins to put them in packets. The fact that Petros has about two metres of mostly unused space and huddles himself, his wares and his daily decanting routine into less than a metre, means that he and his wares and his daily routines are virtually in the street. This is part marketing strategy I am sure, but it's most definitely also

social. The Market is the most social location in this particular extension[10], Skopas. The street, the most significant space for young people in Khutsong.

Streets in Khutsong are places of access and open ownership, where the unemployed and claustrophobic find space, and people. There are many streets in Khutsong, some tarred, most not. They get difficult to traverse when it has rained and the mud means you walk in twisted paths and leap across pools to safety. Driving is even worse in these streets. All these streets lead to one road. You can enter Khutsong by only one road. A fact often mentioned by locals when speaking about the township in everyday conversation, clearly a noted element of the community's local imaginary. It has a single entrance and exit, a contained unit of perfected security-minded urban planning of the apartheid government. The only thing that stands along that road is the largest building in Khutsong: the police station complex. It's by far the most substantial building, rivalled perhaps only by the high schools of Khutsong. It's the first thing you see at the first of only five traffic lights in the entire township. The complex includes a two room clinic, one of two in Khutsong, and a small library. The library is stocked with Afrikaans fiction from the 1970s, formerly of the Carletonville library; these books have blank date forms in their back sleeves and still contain the old library card of its previous residing place. The library also stocks various English language fiction and non-fiction books from the 80s, a few from the early 90s and a number of more recent and quite substantial additions that include local histories, post colonial theory and continental fiction. These newer editions have a library stamp that says North West Province, and therefore dates as additions between 2005 and 2008. There is nothing more recent than that. It's frequented by at least 6 or

10'Extensions' is an apartheid era town planning reference to the various areas of a township. Often this is not necessarily an extended part of an initial part of a township as the word might imply as often extensions were developed within the initial plans of townships, which were often highly orchestrated pre-planned socio-geographical constructions. This included the single entry for security purposes. Exceedingly high multiway lights rather than more domestic and (tamperable) street lights, also for security. As well as the cultural zoning of black people in singular townships into linguistically separate extensions. Extensions refer very particularly to mass housing planning of a working class areas (as there are some historically white areas with extensions – such as Kempton Park). More affluent areas would be referred to as suburbs. They were also more likely to have names, whereas townships would have numbers – a kind of distancing and de-domesticating that was interestingly undone by the local naming (and therefore claiming) of places.

8 people at a time, not a bad figure for a library generally, but particularly for one this size and located in a police station.

Further up from the police station is the second traffic light in Khutsong. Most people stop at the red only if there is a vehicle very obviously travelling through the green. And vehicles behind you will hoot if you stop when there are no vehicles to hinder you. At the traffic light is the Khutsong petrol station, *Excel*, which is owned by the same man who owns the Khutsong supermarket, *Saverite* – still often referred to by the name of its predecessor *Score*. Skopas is the first zone of the township you see when you travel the single road into Khutsong proper[11]. Skopas is the colloquial name; it is in fact Extension 2.

Skopas are packs of coloured and sweetened popcorn, otherwise referred to as amakipkip, sold widely throughout the country's townships. There seems no consensus as to why this part of Khutsong is named Skopas, with suggestions that it refers to the multi-coloured houses (which aren't multi-coloured) or to it being the first part of the township to sell the above mentioned popcorn. My guess would be that Skopas, built later than some of the other areas, was not specifically constructed linguistically, but rather is a 'multiplex' of various peoples of various linguistic groups, somewhat like the popcorn. Skopas' houses are newer; many have toilets built inside, and two, even three bedrooms. Most homes have a shack or two built outside, used for extra income through rent, or for storage of possessions that don't fit in the house, likewise for elder children who need their space. Like most other houses in Khutsong, they are surrounded by at least a metre and a half of veranda. These verandas seem integral to homes; they are concrete, painted red or black (I only once ever saw a green one) and polished religiously. This polishing is done predominantly by older women, on their hands and knees with cobra tin polish. Homes that are obsessively well kept, have a little more money, or a youngish gogo that doesn't

11 Khutsong South or extension four, is the most recent addition to Khutsong built after 1994 within South Africa's RDP economic programme (see Mckinley and Veriava 2005). People move between the two quite frequently and there is little difference between them, but extension four is definitely apart. Most specifically because it is not held at ransom by the single entrance.

work, have consistently gleaming verandas; beacons of non-contamination of homes often surrounded by relentless dust. Many of these yards are also meticulously swept, leaving linear patterns on the surface as if it has been scrubbed with steelwool. Skopas is one of the better off neighbourhoods in Khutsong, noticeable because many of its roads are paved and most houses have a yard wall. The Market is somewhat of its centre, the taxi drops many people off at this point, a crossroads of routes that have to be taken further by foot. Each taxi hoots in greeting at Petros, he responds to each individually. Each person who alights a taxi greets him, he responds personally. And these are only the people who pass by. Every day, without fail, there sits an assortment of young men, at different hours, for different periods, in different assemblages. They drift in and out of the group, depending if they have things to do, people to see. But daily they sit, unemployed men, at the Market.

These young men are from Skopas; but each extension has its various spots, 'emakoneni' as they are known. Some connected to a market, or a carwash or simply a tree. There are a number of extensions: 'Central' is the very centre of Khutsong, dominated by an open field; used for daily soccer practice and intermittent driving lessons. The field is also owned by the man who owns the Excel and the Saverite, which are situated in it. This man also lives in Central, which is by far the most affluent part of Khutsong, with two or three double-story houses. A block or two up, adjacent to the area referred to as 'the burbs', is Club Sedibeng, mostly called 'koRoundi' by those in the know. Club Sedibeng is more than the average tavern. It regularly has Jazz bands playing for example, an immediate indication of a different stratum of clientele to the average tavern in Khutsong. The cars outside indicate this further, Golf GTI's, Audis and the like. And the men inside wear golf shirts, and have beer bellies and bald heads and average an age of 45. However, this is apparently not the major BEE[12] spot.

12 BEE stands for Black Economic Empowerment, a state initiated affirmative action plan. For more on the particulars of formal BEE see Mbeki 2007, 2009 in particular and Marcus et al 2007 more generally. What Mbeki's book does not entirely point to is the subculture that has grown around it as BEE, an acronym, has come to possess meaning in the popular imaginary that is somewhat removed from the acronym and bestows it a wholly more complex conceptual standing. BEE has come to signify a certain aspirational style of living with very

There is another that the Mayor frequents on the weekends. I have never been there.

Across from Club Sedibeng is the Stadium. The stadium is often commented on by members of the community as 'an excuse for a stadium'. It is a very basic grass field, well enough kept, and has soccer posts, without nets, at each end. It has a stop-nonsense[13] around its entire circumference and spectator stands on its northern side. People are despondent about the stadium because the grass is just ordinary grass rather than a more special sort for sport; there are no change rooms or other quality facilities. Currently the stadium barely serves even in its most basic function, as the stop nonsense is broken in many parts, and the spectator stand in particular has had its roofing ripped off and much of the seating damaged in vandalism missions from the demarcation protests. It also apparently used to have a pool just outside, of which there is now absolutely no evidence, except for a large graffiti sprawl in blue on the facebrick wall where it used to be. A four or five metre 'Khutsong Swimming Pool' sprawled across the wall like a eulogy. There is also the surfacing of old netball courts with one or two net-less rings near where the pool used to be, but they are all derelict and largely abandoned since the widespread destruction. Next to that is Badirile High School, a large and narrow facebrick building, four floors high. It's one of three High Schools in Khutsong.

Just beyond that is extension 1, Batswaneng, a colloquial term once again, that loosely translates as the place of the Tswana language speakers, another remnant of apartheid urban planning and social construction. Batswaneng has few paved roads and mostly two room houses. It is commonly known as the

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particular significations for black middle class-ness. Ama-BEE (with variations that take on other names such as 'black diamonds' etc) have become a particular moneyed grouping of their own, known for conspicuous and flashy indications of new found wealth.

13 A stop-nonsense is a prefabricated slat fencing, cheap and easy to assemble and therefore popular around many buildings in townships and suburbs. The term, a colloquialism found widely in townships, as well as other areas, and whose origin I cannot guess at, comes from their introduction as a way of keeping mundane neighbourhood troubles out of ones yard. Unlike its predecessor, the chicken wire fence, which was often no more than a metre high and transparent, the stop nonsense keeps out trouble makers who might tease your chickens, kids who steal fruit off your trees or people who pass through your property on their way into another.

oldest part of Khutsong with the oldest, smallest government built houses. The major BEE spot is a car wash nearby, a phenomenon of social gatherings throughout South Africa and a definite sign of shifted economic relations. Carwashes with their big cars, and their paid labour cleaning, have become one of the more populous social spaces throughout the country for the performance of BEE identity and elite peer interaction. This is done, however, right near a dilapidated field and not far from those mud and rock strewn streets that re-arrange the walking patterns of people according to the whims of the weather.

Other renamed extensions – formally built parts of Khutsong - and specified areas of the township include Maxhoseni, 'the place of Xhosa Language speakers' – historically significant as Xhosa speakers were imported from the Eastern Cape as migrant labour on the mines. Near Maxhoseni is Rest-In-Peace, an area surrounding the old cemetery.

I spent less time in these areas, other than passing through on the way to somewhere else or an interview or two. A methodological digression here; though I attempted to spread my interactions across the township as much as possible, my circle was dominated by young people from Skopas and Extension three, largely due to snowballing but also quite by co-incidence when independently accessed sources happened to live in similar areas. Particularly amongst the unemployed, peer groups are largely geographically specific as the local corner becomes the immediate point of social access. School friends often spread across areas however, as the limited number of high schools resulted in geographical cross-over. Largely I think my coverage was sufficient, and geographical differences didn't automatically indicate differences in points of view or lifestyle[14]. A particular difference might be levels of family-based income and therefore standard of living. This, I believe, was relatively covered by the distinctively variant environments of Skopas and Extension three.

14 Though many people I spoke to often suggested that I needed to speak to people from all around Khutsong, insinuating difference, in practice I found strong similarities.

Extension three is the last edge of Khutsong proper, where almost none of the roads are tarred and most of the house walls are made of corrugated iron. Made up of site-and-service plots, Extension three afforded people plots supplied with an outside toilet and tap and electricity. The expectation in the 1980s when they were created was that people would build their own houses on the serviced plots (Kulwane 2002). Most still haven't. Extension three is the poorest and the roughest of the extensions, second only to the parts of Khutsong that don't officially belong – the squatter camps, shack lands of mkhukhus[15] on the outskirts of the township. Extension three has even more taverns than the rest of Khutsong, at every third or fourth house, and house[16] music blares through its dust ridden streets constantly. Except between about four and six am, when suddenly, after having woken to the sounds of nightlives enjoyed all through the night, one awakes to nothing, a stark emptiness of the air. As if the party goers have slunk back into the shadows, chased by the coming of the sun, and those daywalkers, who attempted sleep all night begged for just a few more hours before they begin again.

Extension three has hollow air, permeated by sound and light. It is lit up brightly by the apartheid era township lights, tens of metres high with a ring of spot lights that beam into all the windows and sleeping faces and light up the neatly swept red dust gardens of each and every house like a modified, and slightly uneasy, daylight. Extension three has invaded air; the houses are thin and too small for a family to ensure even the least demure privacy and the yards have one metre high chicken-wire fences, broken and bent in most places that mean you watch

15 Mkhukhu is the colloquial term for informal housing, or shacks. Made mostly of corrugated iron on wooden structures they can also include masonite boarding, cardboard and plastic. Mkhukhus can have several 'rooms', usually not more than three, though many are simply subdivided by a curtain. Though there has been a major state drive throughout the country to electrify them (See Huchzermeyer 2004), many remain dependant on paraffin for cooking and light, as well as candles, which often results in massively destructive fires where many loose all their possessions and even their lives.

16 A type of music, house music is arguably the biggest music genre in the South African black music market and South Africa has been the number one consumer of international house music in the world for some time (there is little scholastic material on the growth of house music in South Africa, however some media has picked up the now aging trend. See Petridis 2010 – note most of the media coverage dates to the focus on South Africa around the World Cup).

your neighbour wash her clothes, and she watches you. At their most luxurious, the homes are two roomed – one bedroom and one other room. Often, the other room is split into kitchen and sitting room. The toilet stands outside in the yard, three or four metres from the backdoor, but most women will use a bucket at night.

I have never been to the squatter camps at night but I would assume they are much the same, but the sound travels louder through the corrugated iron walls. The squatter camps are not as densely packed as those in and around Johannesburg and two can pass each other easily between one shack and another. They often have small yards too, unusual for the norms of squatter camp living. Khutsong is above average-township green generally; with many fruit trees and a number of manicured grass lawns. But most yards are dust yards, with perhaps one tree for shade; dry, windblown red/brown dust, swept religiously. Many in the squatter camps are new arrivals, from the Eastern Cape and further up the continent predominantly[17]. Parts of them are internally monitored carefully, by political or 'occupational' allegiances. Many a time on passing through, friends have remarked at cars parked outside particular shacks, huge and brand new, mostly four wheel drives. Sometimes more than one[18].

Beyond the shacks are grass lands, some marshes and on the eastern side, open lakes. They stand as a buffer[19], with the train tracks for extra measure, between Khutsong township and the town, Carletonville. Carletonville is a twenty minute drive from Khutsong, along the single entry road. Carletonville is a large

17 There is a definite sense amongst many people in Khutsong that the Squatter camps are filled with migrants, mostly unemployed and largely thought to be involved in illegal activities, especially illegal mining. There is a hint of some Xenophobia here, some towards non nationals and some towards nationals from different (usually poorer) parts of the country, who are seen as willing to work for very low pay and as therefore 'taking' jobs away from 'locals'.

18 The seeming contradiction of living in informal housing and driving one or two luxury cars is usually an indication of illegal activity. The shack lands, due to their informal quality, their lack of municipal lighting, their usually highly populated and narrow roaded structure tend to be conducive to conducting illegal activity without interference. The informal nature of the housing is also an indication of the mobility of those conducting illegal activity.

19 Buffer zones, like single entry/exit townships, are part of the heavy apartheid urban planning legacy that exists in almost ever area of South Africa. For more on this see Smith 1992.

town with a relatively small population of 30 000[20] people, predominantly white but with a growing middle-class black population. Many of the people who are lucky enough to work permanently on the mines move from Khutsong to Carletonville, and their children go to the schools in their neighbourhoods. But the town exists largely separate from the township, particularly for unemployed people who have little reason and little resource to get there. It's walkable distance, and many do each day, along the road or through the grasslands and across the train tracks.

The landscape is beautiful, but hostile. Mostly due to the long term mining in the area, the land Khutsong is built on and surrounded by is ill fit for human habitation. Sink holes, caused by unnatural water drainage, has seen large parts of the landscape collapse, into itself, swallowing whole trees and damaging property. Acid mine water from the tailings dams and inadequate mine drainage have poisoned the many water sources that crisscross through the area[21]. The mines are scars on the landscape, the physical landscape and the emotional landscape. Ever a part of the local imaginary, having been the genesis of the town of Carletonville's purpose, and therefore of Khutsong's as well, the mines are ingrained in the histories of the people that live there. A part of generational labour histories and even memories, few people in Khutsong are employed in the mines anymore. And those that are, work intermittently and usually for contractors (and therefore on short term, insecure tenure)[22].

Bafana, a young resident of Khutsong, worked on the mines for a short while, as a technician's assistant underground, and then later as a clerk above ground.

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20 The Merafong Municipality estimated 28 090 people in Carletonville and 149 850 in Khutsong in 2005. Khutsong has, by far, the largest population in Merafong (Merafong, 2009).

21 This is a contentious point for many in the area, and will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. For more detail on the environmental problems see Liefferink 2009, who came to speak at a workshop organised by young people in Khutsong on my third field visit to the area.

22 One of the reasons given for Khutsong's relatively low level of development is that the sink holes created by the dolomitic soil in the area, and exacerbated by the mines, means that the township is in fact unsafe and should be moved. There have been plans for relocations on the basis of safety since the 1980s (apartheid era) but then, and now, the state has said it does not have adequate funds for the major project.

Born in Soweto, to a mother from Soweto and a father from Ventersdorp, Bafana has lived in Khutsong for most of his life. He travelled outside of Khutsong each day to attend a technical high school in a neighbouring town, Wedela, a town nestled in a valley that looks up at the Elandsrand mine. It is a direct product of the mine, and is the pool of black labour for it (the town of white labour is just beyond the ridge). The school is set up to teach high school students technical subjects, particular to mining, such as fitting and turning, motor mechanics and technical drawing amongst many others. Bafana did fitting and turning there and after matriculating, went to Westcol, a tertiary college in Carletonville, to continue with a fitting and turning diploma. Like almost all of the people I spoke too, he was unable to finish his studies due to financial difficulties and has attempted numerous ways of making alternative plans for a better life.

Since dropping out of school, Bafana has worked at numerous places doing various and mostly unrelated jobs. These include being a security guard at a lodge in Magaliesburg (a nearby mountainous area that hosts numerous upmarket leisure spots), general construction labour at a construction company, as well as at the mines. Bafana worked for a contract company fitting pipes as part of the Pipes, Ventilation and Trench (PVT) division. He worked as an assistant to the skilled staff. He was afforded a basic introduction to being in the mines and promptly sent underground. He recalls;

> At first when I was at the school they teach you about what's going to happen. And I was fine, I was with my friends. Then they told us, 'Guys we are done here, next, tomorrow, you are going underground'. Yoh, I was scared. Underground, I was scared of the cage. I was working, you know Randfontein? I was going maybe that distance [underground]. It's far… and it was my first time. And the people who drive the cage, if maybe they recognise there are new people, they will drive that cage, and they stop it [abruptly]. You feel like there's something with your tummy.

Bafana continuously repeats his fears at working underground, at the rumours they had heard about rock falls and how he was too afraid to ever venture beyond the tunnel, which was large and well lit. “Those places on the side there, yoh, I didn’t go, I was scared. I was lucky I didn’t have to go. There are some people who have to, they are working there”. Further he disapproved of the incessant heat, waiting hours each day simply to get to the floor he worked on and then to get back above ground, his boredom at not doing something that interested him. “I ended up working at the mines underground. I tried telling them what are my capabilities. They didn’t give me a chance so I can work the job I like, so I ended up leaving the company.”

Bafana got his next job through his cousin, who lives in Carletonville with her husband and works as an HR official at the mine. His sister had to pay a bribe or *Tjo-tjo*, to the appropriate people in order to ensure him the job. He was soon moved to a surface job, as a clerk at the salvage yards. He handled orders for new parts and enjoyed it but said it paid too little. And it was still a contract job, and nobody wants a contract job. They pay too little and you can never guarantee your job. Even though his cousin had paid a significant amount to get him the job, he was soon frustrated.

> Most of the people I was working with [underground] they were illiterate so they chose me. I didn’t like it. There is this language that can accommodate everyone, they call it Fanagalo. So I didn’t like it and because most of the time I was with white people I would just speak English or Afrikaans, so that’s why they chose me. I don’t like it, Fanagalo, its boring for me. I just don’t like it, it’s stupid

Bafana has had an education that’s left him relatively equipped and markedly more confident than a lot of the people, mostly older and from rural backgrounds, that he worked worth. He has a definite dislike of Fanagalo, a ‘language’ made

up of short phrases of instructions that mixes the various South African vernacular languages with Afrikaans and English with no consideration of grammar or pronunciation, used on the mines so that bosses and miners from vastly different rural areas who were largely illiterate could communicate[23]. The language is effectively a bastardization of black vernacular languages when considered in its simplest form, and this is exactly what Bafana responds to. For a young man who is confident in various languages, speaking a language that for him represents a generation that was forced into the mines and struggled is not an option. Further, Fanagalo, when spoken by a black man, insinuates that the man is a basic labourer. Bafana has bigger dreams for higher positions, and Fanagalo doesn't fit in those plans. Bafana wants to be an artisan, "if you're an artisan you get a *fat* salary".

Bafana was retrenched from his clerk job and has worked on and off 'piece' jobs since then. He has however; done an eight month course at the Driefontein Mine's free college and is waiting for his 'papers'. "The reason I attended the school, I want a learnership. If you get high marks I will get a learnership, then I won't have to pay". Bafana has numerous schemes for how to get a job, and simply looking for one is not enough, he knows it won't get him anywhere. He goes to school so he has a certificate that proves his qualification, but even more so because there is a possibility of a one way ticket into a mine learnership, and therefore a possibility of a good job. In the mean time he paints houses, does some intermittent welding and chills at the Market. He is the oldest brother of three orphans whose parents seem to have died of AIDS[24] and who are all still at school leaving him as the bread winner. Bafana is 24. Many of Bafana's friends are employed, one is a banker, another is a businessman and another is a soldier. "They got jobs, cars, one even bought a house. Most of them are living to

23 For more information on the history and usage of Fanagalo see Mesthrie 1989.

24 I was told by numerous other people that Bafana's parents had died of AIDS but he never actually told me so. I didn't think it necessary to get him to be specific when he mentioned his parents' deaths. Though spoken about very little by the people I spent time with, it didn't seem to be a major point of difficulty or stigma.

their dreams but me, I'm still struggling". None of them live in Khutsong any longer.

When Bafana and I went for a drive through the western areas of Merafong, to Wedela, we discussed at length the extent to which a job would be the major change in his life, how it would make everything better. Bafana even referred to his little brother, who is really smart, who he would like to put through University. He felt a pressure to start working now in order to have reached the means to afford his brothers university costs by the time he matriculates; his brother has four more years to go. The weight of acquiring a job, and a good job, can seem almost too much to bear. "First I must be established. There are things that I need before a family. A nice house. I've got a house [his deceased mother's] but I want to fix it. But if I get married I have to buy a house, for my wife. I will start thinking about it [starting a family] in five years". He had just paid R3000 for a job and was anxiously awaiting a call from the shop steward on the mine who said that his job was still coming up, that he should be patient; he would call him before Tuesday. Paying for jobs on the mines is common practice, unless you have an important family member in the trade union who can arrange one for you. For Bafana, who has been unemployed for two months (a relatively short time in comparison to many of the others who blom (hang around) at the market and he was studying for the 8 months prior), R3000 is a lot of begging from family and friends and saving from what little money he gets. He is concerned that the man might have cheated him and whilst restlessly checking his phone, he concurrently plots his plan to get his money back and 'teach that man a lesson' should the job fall through.

Our drive led us through a mostly empty landscape of highveld grasslands, dotted with unassuming compounds of old dilapidated but still occupied houses and then suddenly, interrupted by huge mine territories, with giant mine dumps, usually one the standard golden yellow, and another stone grey. They have massive, twenty story towers that jut out into the sky intermittently like land

markers of ownership and presence. Strangely enough, one simply drives into these territories with little more than a sign to note you're on private property when you are. Closer to the buildings there may be a 'welcome to' banner, usually on a concrete stand much like the types that one sees on entering a small town on the west rand. There will also be a billboard, with a picture of a mole or bird with a miner's helmet and torch, reminding all those entering that the mine company "cares about safety".

It's possible to drive right through these territories, from one side to the other, exiting out the other side as a quick way of getting somewhere. This is exactly what we did getting to Wedela, driving through the Elandsrand mine, past the miners' compounds, four or five story blocks of flats about 50 flats wide, many of them, all painted yellow. Adjacent to the compound is a taxi rank and numerous men in overalls and helmets, back from their day's work. As you drive further up the road you rise up to the top of a hill that's been overwhelmed by a giant grey dump, that sits on the tip of the landscape, heavy and constricting. It demanded my attention, astonished me that so much might be pulled out of the ground beneath us. So much so that I did not notice the town, that, in the shadow of the giant grey mound, had emerged, spread out across the valley in what was effectively the middle of nowhere. Except of course it wasn't; it's right next to the mine. It's a small town, and has a really big school, though only one. Almost every house is made of red facebrick and has a red roof, evidence of being built by the mine[25]. The school is red too and is dominated by a single large building with three big warehouses on its side, also red, which are wood work and metal work workshops, I'm told.

We went to visit his friend Thabo who lives on the northern edge of Wedela. We just happened to drive past him on our way to his house; he was chilling at a spaza shop. Thabo and Bafana went to Wedela Technical School together and

25 Wedela was built by Harry Oppenheimer, the richest man in South Africa. The name he created by taking the first few letters of Western Deep Levels Mine and the first few letters of Elandsrand Mine to form the word Wedela. (Merafong 2009)

worked on the same PVT team on the mines. Thabo had stayed on when Bafana left, but had been fired soon afterward when the mine manager happened upon the team sleeping underground (something he and Bafana had done often) which is against safety rules and apparently grounds for immediate expulsion.

Thabo had been unemployed ever since and stayed at home with his mother and unemployed sister, who had just announced to him that she was lesbian, a major subject for discussion between him and Bafana (the conclusion ended up that lesbians are okay but gay men are not). Thabo laughed at Bafana when he heard he had paid for a job. He claimed he would never. Thabo had been unemployed for over a year and was desperate, "but not that desperate, I would rather do crime than pay for a job". I'm not sure if Thabo was joking about doing crime, probably not. But for Thabo, paying thousands of Rands for a job, when you don't even have a job in order to make the thousands of Rands, is like admitting defeat. "It's like begging but worse", he says. Crime[26], it would seem, affords him more self respect than paying to work.

Bafana was not perturbed; he claimed to be seeing the bigger picture. He wants a job with the mine itself, not a contractor, which is much easier to get. Contract workers don't have permanent jobs, and are subject to renewed contracts. There is also little chance of working your way up, or getting further education. Bafana is convinced that he can get a position with the mine, and work his way up to a Safety Officer in a few months and be making R12 000 per month, and driving 'something small', like a Citi Golf, in no time. And get a few diplomas or even an engineering degree to become an official, and be driving an X5[27] in a couple of years, firmly placing himself within the growing number of upper middle class black South Africans.

26 The nexus of work/crime/corruption reoccurs again in further chapters. However, it is worth mentioning here that a bribe is not considered crime to many of the people I spoke to. It is however recognised as corruption, though only on the part of the person who demands one, and corruption (as a term if not as a fully defined concept) seems universally frowned upon.

27 An X5 is a high end luxury BMW four wheel drive. The average one starts at a minimum amount of R800 00.

This isn't a pipe dream; a few in his community and some of his friends have done the same and are living good lives. And he is good at science and maths. The only thing is he is lazy, lazy to work. That's how he put it to me. Plus of course, he doesn't like being underground.

> I can say I will only work there for five years, and then I can do my own thing… Because I can say, I am lazy, waking up in the morning and going to work, I will say I want to do business. Because working, ey, I don't like working, [waiting for] getting paid at the end of the month. I am not a hard worker. I just prefer maybe making some deals and there are people working for me and I pay them, that's why I think I'll be a successful entrepreneur. You have to work hard but you don't work physically, I don't like hard labour

Bafana's reference to entrepreneurs and the amount of work they do, "making some deals" seems perhaps a little misjudged, but may not be too farfetched. Tenderpreneurs, as they have come to be called, are some of the fastest money makers in the township and one can spot them from a mile away. Their homes grow exponentially almost overnight. The only other people who come close in such magical transformations are those working for the municipality. And both are notorious for not needing to do the work, to get the money.

> I think those people can fix those things. But those people who have those tenders to fix those things, I can say they have eaten the money… corruption is on a major percentage around here, even the job, to work at the municipality there, you must know those people. You must be an ANC member or something, you must be well recognised.

If you are not part of these structures, the money is difficult to access. But Bafana intends on getting there somehow, and for now, he waits.

Bafana hangs out at the Market every day; he lives only a few metres away from it and takes the short walk every morning to it, beginning each day with a cigarette. For most young people in Khutsong, home might house a combination of grandparents, parents, older siblings and very young siblings, often in two room houses; which makes for claustrophobic living. For many unemployed young people, the confines of the house and a likely nagging mother or aunt intent on harassing a young man or woman into employment, make the nothingness of unemployment especially acute. For Bafana, who only lives with his relatively grown up younger siblings, this is not as much of an issue. Yet day after day he returns to the Market, to wait, for that phone call or his certificate or some other opportunity. There, unemployed young men gather socially, and might distract one another from their realities for a short while. These young men often have little in common with each other, or even with Petros. They may not like the same music[28], be of the same peer group[29], have gone to the same school or be interested in the same things. They do, however, all live in the same neighbourhood and do not work regularly.

Youth unemployment statistics are often a contentious subject in South Africa, not to mention the world[30] (Du Toit 2003). To begin with the official definition for unemployment is those not working for seven days prior to date of data collection, that have 'actively' sought work in the past four weeks (Stats SA,

28 Music, a differentiation between a few choices: house music, kwaito music, hip-hop or jazz; might infer the subgrouping or subculture one is affiliated with and can even denote age group and income bracket (Steingo, 2005).

29 Peer groups are usually defined by school age sets, with friends being of the same age, with perhaps a year, maximum two years difference. This is often maintained when young people go straight to university, in which case high school class age sets are maintained with one or two exceptions of students who may have taken gap years, switched courses or be mature students returning to their studies after many years of work. Amongst unemployed youth, these age sets remain for the younger lot, having recently left school and maintaining school friendships. However, as time passes, and some are employed, other seek employment else where and still others are left behind, age sets are dramatically varied. Peer groups may span more than ten years, with groups of 19 year olds friends with those over 30.

30 Fuelling recent spates of violence, and even revolution, throughout the world; youth employment issues were at the heart of Tunisia's Mohammed Bouazizi (Fahim 2011) setting himself alight and sparking revolution throughout the Arab world. London's recent riots (Thomas and Somaiyia, 2011) were related to the many youth left outside of mainstream occupation and a prior spate of protest was around student fees and Generation 1000€ is an Italian web based network (produced out of a book which has been developed into a film) for connecting a new wave of young Europens called 'Milliuristi' struggling to get by on 1000€ a month. (Rimassa and Incorvaia 2005).

2004). When newspapers report on the ‘official’ statistics on unemployment this does not simply mean those collated by ‘official’ sources (the national statistics body Statistics South Africa or Stats SA), but rather those attributed to this definition. In South Africa, where unemployment is inarguably one of the countries direst challenges, to use so narrow a definition seems immensely problematic. However it is used in order to conform to international statistical confinements and therefore accurate comparison. Jointly, Stats SA also counts what is referred to as ‘discouraged work seekers’, who are not officially unemployed, but may have been unemployed so long, or see their situation as so unsalvageable, that they have not looked for work in while, or never intend to again (Stats SA, 2004). In 2010, official unemployment statistics (of working age from 15 to 64) sat at approximately 24% of the population legally considered of working age. Add ‘discouraged work seekers’ to the figure of people who effectively should be working but aren’t and it sits at almost 40% of the population of South Africa (Stats SA, 2009).

As Stats SA lumps discouraged work seekers with students, the disabled and other indications of being ‘not economically’ active in their 2010 Quarterly Labour Survey (QLS – the most up to date labour and unemployment statistics of South Africa), age stats analysis for unemployment is restricted to the official definition. However the point still comes across; of the approximately 4 million officially unemployed people in South Africa, almost 3 million are under the age of 35 (Stats SA 2010c). A quarter of those are ‘new entrants’ as approximately 650 000 matric students (only 67% of which actually passed in 2010) enter the job and study market each year and alarming numbers of tertiary graduates struggle to find work. The employment rate drops gradually (as per population growth, or additions to the labour force) by a slight margin of about 1% each year. In a far less gradual manner, the number of discouraged work seekers rises alarmingly, with an almost 25% increase in discouraged work seekers between 2009 and 2010 (Stats SA 2010c). By the end of 2009, 60% of the unemployed had not been employed for a year or more – only 9% of school leavers find employment

in the first year of leaving school. These statistics point to a vast majority of the work force that will struggle to find work and are likely to never be permanently employed.

Most young people will work, intermittently, floating in and out of jobs they are not committed to, often quitting for lack of adequate pay, interest or respect and other times being fired, retrenched or having their contracts come to an end. Much of this work is unskilled wage labour; and in most cases confined to contract or tender basis in which short term projects such as building roads, refurbishing government buildings or even working as part of a technical team in a mine mean that at the end of that contract there is a good chance there may not immediately be another, and that there is almost no chance of gaining skills or working ones way up through long term commitment and on-the-job training. Young people, therefore, flit between jobs that are uninspiring and do not offer them any possibilities for growth and more substantial careers as they get older. A youth (non)work force, that never works consistently, means a number of generations who will never maintain formal bank accounts, will never save money or invest, can never access bonds and never buy a house, will struggle to consistently pay school fees and ensure an adequate education for their children, will always rely on state funded health care and most likely government grants and cannot, in short, ever be fully engaged in the country's economy and are mostly unable to add substantially to macroeconomic stability or even micro-community development. "Across very different local labour markets, the youth are the most permanently excluded from wage earning: in the mid-2000s, 65,8 percent of the unemployed aged 25 to 34 had never held a paid occupation" (Barchiesi 2011, 75).

Rather, for the time being they chill at the market, cowering[31] in its limited shade from the unforgiving rays of the sun. I would sit there too, for much of my time.

31 I use the term cowering quite specifically. Khutsong is extremely hot in the summer, and there isn't easily accessible water at the Market if one gets thirsty. Additionally, though more particular to girls, sitting in the sun means getting darker skin, which is seen as a negative (see

We sit on upturned old 5l paint cans, buckets and hardboard tomato boxes; improvised seating that is easily stored on the roof of the market in the evenings. There, shifting round the structure as the sun shifts, we sit, chat, smoke – sometimes only one or two, at other times ten or fifteen – we wake up extraordinarily early, sometimes five or six am, to sit and do nothing. This space is dominated by young men, who have the social luxury to be able to sit on the corner, a less acceptable practice for young women who; it is generally believed (particularly by elders) shouldn't be smoking publicly, are expected to assist in domestic chores more than their male counterparts, and are also more likely to avoid the sun, for fear of darkening their skin. Though nationally more women struggle to find wage labour than men, work such as domestic workers (exclusively), shop till attendants (almost exclusively)[32] and clothing store staff are dominated by women who are also working in sometimes formal, long term working environments and are more likely to maintain them. In my research therefore, once women worked they were more likely to maintain their jobs. And on the streets of Khutsong men certainly dominate the public image of youth unemployment, purely by their presence. Unemployed women do however saunter to the market to buy vegetables or the like, and will often mill around for some time chatting to people, and will saunter aimlessly through the streets, taking the long way home or stopping by to visit at homes of other unemployed young women. They are therefore mobile, transient, and less fixed in a particular spatial locality than their male counterparts. But they remain as fixed in social space, and its mental accompaniment, of waiting for work.

Other than the corners, the taverns are the most populated terminals of invariable waiting. I think it would be safe to say that there is a tavern on every

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amongst many others, Nuttal, 2006). One of the only positives Bafana could mention about working underground was that his skin got lighter, which would be a marker of being more attractive.

32 The presence of females in the work force cannot be fully considered here but is worth mentioning. In positions of very particular trust, as in domestic work or the 'manning' of a shop till; women are overwhelmingly preferred. This extends to previously male dominated jobs such as security guards and even petrol station attendants, where, whilst still in the minority, more and more women can be found. In security in particular, women security guards are often stationed in personal spaces and are sometimes entrusted other responsibilities such as those of a receptionist, whilst men are given more isolated and less skilled posts such as gate duty, and are more likely to be on night shift.

street in Khutsong. Some of them are quite small, as individual families turn to selling alcohol from their homes as a way of making a living. Mzwakhe runs a tavern with his mom. Mzwakhe has never studied, and worked once, for two weeks, before he was fired for not going back. He had buckled under the constant racist abuse of his supervisor, and had faked sick for three days. His mother and his elder brother don't work either and his youngest brother is still at school. And though he and his mother have taken to selling liquor from their home, his brother only ever sits on the couch and watches TV. He does most of the work, his mom doesn't really feel strongly about keeping the business going. He really doesn't like it though, and is the only young man I met on my field work who doesn't drink alcohol. "My mother decided to sell alcohol but she doesn't focus on it, I'm the only one trying to push it. She sewed, and then stopped. She used to cook, but it stopped. She sold veggies, then it stopped too".

As a business the taverns take a number of forms. Some are formalised, where an entire house is turned into an entertainment venue, with pool tables and rooms with tables and chairs. Others may be only half the house, a garage perhaps, with alcohol sold out of the kitchen window. These are usually the kind that plays music. Chatkop is what Mzwakhe calls the type he runs, where you can't really tell that they sell alcohol, and though some people might sit on upturned beer crates outside, on average people simply buy it and then go home to drink. This means, of course, that there are probably even more liquor outlets than I have necessarily noticed. And I have noticed many.

Men and women, of all ages, sit from the very early morning and all the way into the night, and taverns of every type. Many of them play music, which blares loudly into the street. A single giant speaker will stand just outside the door, or even on the pavement, a meter high sentinel, rectangular and black. Often times during the day they stand quite lonely as people rarely dance in the light. In these cases they serve more as advertising (beer companies often sponsor tavern street signage but they more often do this for registered taverns and many of

these aren't[33]), informing people of their services. I once marvelled at a completely empty yard in Khutsong South, well swept and neat with peach trees along the road, that blasted some of the loudest music I had ever heard in the township out of two of the largest speakers I had seen, that stood on the red polished veranda, the power cable slung through the window. It was about eleven o'clock in the morning and there was literally no one to be seen on the property, though the front door remained slightly ajar. And next door, an old gogo, bent slightly as she walked, but strong and gardening nonetheless, went about her garden, pruning plants and removing weeds. She continued about her work with what seemed little notice of the music blaring directly towards her home. I doubted she was deaf, and even if she had been, I could feel the reverberations through my car.

People are quite resigned to the blasting music; many don't seem to notice it at all. Many of the tavern-goers simply sit during the day. Quiet because they can't speak over the noise, they drink silently, perched on plastic chairs or crates. Most taverns are populated by a wide range of people, though there are obviously some that are a little more popular on a Friday or Saturday night. But at ten in the morning on a Tuesday or Wednesday men and women from their mid twenties through to their sixties, sit in taverns and drink. Most taverns only sell 'quarts', almost a litre at a time of select brands, mostly brown bottles, sometimes green ones[34]. Though on weekdays the people I knew were rarely completely drunk (though they were often a little high from dagga), they always were on weekends. They would stumble through the streets at midday on a Sunday, and attempt to

33 I was told by a young man who worked adhoc for South African Breweries (SAB) that they were not allowed to supply taverns if they didn't have licences. But that they often did, and then would assist the taverns to get licenses. The licensing laws are currently being reviewed and the intention is to get as many taverns licensed in order to ascertain the extent of alcohol consumption in the country and possibly limit the number of liquor outlets in a particular radius, this is being led by Cape Town, which instituted stricter laws in 2010 (IOL 2011a).

34 Brown bottles are historically South African produced, such as Castle, Black label and Hansa and therefore cheaper. This is not really the case any longer but favourites have largely been established and most still remain cheaper. Brown bottles and green bottles have even come to signify class dynamics, with a local brown bottled beer company addressing this directly in their advertising campaign. Stated plainly on their advertising companies website "Hansa Pilsener, one of South Africa's biggest beer brands faced a challenge in 2008. As a brown bottle beer, Hansa Pilsener needed to win the loyalty of consumers who associated wealth and status with green" (http://www.oilinsight.co.za/our-work/hansa.php)

tell me important things about Khutsong in a drunken drawl. The reason they drank on weekends is that they relied on their working friends to pay for enough alcohol to get drunk. And though they certainly wouldn't be hampered if drunk during the week, their friends wouldn't be around, so they would wait patiently. And friends often obliged, as the state of being employed was never certain and inevitably swapped hands after a while, at which point it would be you waiting, for the weekend, and your working friends.

Bafana is one of the people I know who drinks ceaselessly. He's even often teased for what's called a *phuza* face[35], a rarity for someone his age. He often gets into fights at taverns, even with friends. We chatted about his level of drinking;

> I can say it's because of the stress I'm having. It's not easy to be the head of the house and you're unemployed. Maybe I'll change. I'm quite aware that I have to stop drinking but it's not easy…hey man, I'm drowning my sorrows. They must get off my case. But I'm well aware that I have to stop this drinking thing. But I first want to get a job, then I'll stop.

Bafana is convinced that should he have a job he would be too busy working. And in his spare time, he would have a car and enough money to visit family, and buy them things. So he would drink less, even though he will have more money to buy alcohol. For Arendt (1958) this is a direct reference to the relation between wage labour and socialization. For Bafana, wage labour indicates a particular socialization with particular activities and norms. For Arendt, *Arbeitsgesellschaft*, a wage labour-based society, means that belonging and social construction is

35 'Phuza' means drink in IsiZulu. A phuza face is a physical indicator of someone who drinks copious amounts of alcohol, and sometimes an indicator of drug abuse. Difficult to describe, but often easy to pick out, it is usually indicated in slight facial swelling, particularly in the cheeks and under the eyes. It can also include chronic red eyes and a black line along the inner edge of the bottom lip (both lips would also be slightly swollen and slightly darker coloured). Though an alcohol specific medical term doesn't exist, facial edema seems to be caused by kidney water retention issues when too much alcohol is consumed.

determined by wage labour. Bafana indicates that without wage labour, society and community *obligation* are non-existent, he doesn't visit his family and doesn't engage in the 'normative', such as commercial consumption. His answer then is to divorce himself, to drink, and not stop drinking until he has reason to. And much of the township continues with him. Alcohol abuse is thought to be a leading factor behind Carletonville/Khutsong's high HIV infection rate (Williams et al, 2000). And probably therefore the high rate of teenage pregnancies too. This only exacerbates the situation of unemployment, as those who are unable to work become casualties to further hardship.

The fact that continuous struggles emerge in the media on publication of unemployment stats, about terminology and definitions, speaks to a very complex social dynamic that struggles to come to terms with concepts around employment, poverty and meritocracy. Those who no longer look for work, and sit on corners all day are perhaps at the centre of these debates as the neo-liberal, merit based expectation is that those who are unemployed should spend their ample time knocking on every door seeking employment or finding ways to create it. Many of these young people have been there, walking the streets and inquiring at every store, building site and company they come across, and they all recount the agonising disappointment and rejection. Most places simply don't have work in a small town such as Carletonville, and certainly not in Khutsong itself; and people will not employ someone who has stepped off the street, for fear of safety. For those few who have been successful with this approach, the work, completely unbeknownst to them on inquiry, was often back-breaking, highly underpaid and in some cases, subject to extreme abuse on the part of superiors. And so most people, on being unable to face the constant rejection and subject themselves to the outright frustration, seek work through their networks, through referral and suggestion. The likelihood of acquiring an interview and then a job, this way, is exponentially higher. This has its numerous problems, as those more specifically networked are more likely to find work; those, and there are many, whose entire family and majority of their peer group is

unemployed, struggle immensely. And other than a reminder phone call, when one has airtime, to someone who promised to try find something where they work or with someone they know, this approach lends itself to simply waiting.

But for every unemployed person I spoke to, each one had quit a job without guarantee of another. And, like Bafana, is more willing to be unemployed than work in the job they had quit. A curious situation, as most complained bitterly about being without a job, it was difficult to get a definitive answer for how no job, and no money, could possibly be better than something, even if small, difficult and uninspiring. Though each person refers to wanting something better and to make their lives better, this is articulated as not having to be a terrible working experience. Lauren Berlant refers to this as “a less-bad life” in her paper on post-Fordist affect in European youth. For Berlant, the post-Fordist era results in a generation of young people who struggle for wage labour and seek a sense of normalcy and stability through whatever means possible, relying heavily on the legitimacy of wage labour. Particular to her paper, it is the legitimacy of *any* work. She states, “ the ongoing prospect of low-waged and uninteresting labour is for Rosetta nearly Utopian, and it makes possible imagining living the *proper* life that capitalism offers as a route to the *good* life” (2007, 275. italics in the original).

I am not convinced this is the case with many of the people I spoke to, who combined a sense of aspiration for the good life with a very complicated understanding of what that good life might be, and what the *proper* way to get it is. Particular here, is that senses of merit do not go unquestioned, and understandings of alternative ways of achieving the good life are quite wide and un-conservative, as Bafana has mentioned above in regards to being ‘lazy’. Unlike the film character Berlant discusses, Bafana is convinced he can get something better; he has done his homework, worked out the system, done the first round of training and has a plan for what happens next and longer term plans for studying further. Most significantly, Bafana has his eye on a very particular job. This is rare amongst most of the people I spoke to, who mentioned

quite liking one job they had done at some point, or having a friend who had a job that sounded good. For most, there is no plan, there is no dream job.

Bafana also displays a sense of ingenuity, many a hatched plan for employment. He covers his bases, ensuring the best possible coverage to ensure a job. Bafana studied further to ensure a certificate, but studied also because he thought he might get a learnership. Whilst he waits for his certificate, and his learnership, he has also paid for a job, just to be sure. And though not actively engaging politics to get a job, Bafana did vote; “I voted last time because of, I thought maybe if you don’t have a barcoded ID [to show] you have voted, maybe it can close some other channels. Maybe if once you go find a job or what, they’ll see that you didn’t even vote.”Bafana, like many others, negotiates many terms in attempts to ensure a job. And clear here, is that politics and locating oneself in one’s citizenship[36], using the ultimate document of state, is complexly considered part of acquiring employment.

This shows a very complex understanding of how jobs are acquired and how they are deserved. There is a rhetoric doing the rounds, said by many and equally frowned upon by others (throughout the country, in common conversation, the press and talk shows in particular), that the government should provide people with jobs. Most often the kind of job is not specified and the amount one should be paid is not mentioned either. Currently the state is the largest employer of black South Africans and plays the most major singular role in growing the black middle class, what Roger Southall refers to as the *Civil Petty Bourgeoisie* or *CPB*, with a work force of over 1 and a half million South Africans and at least 34% of the overall employed in South Africa, spearheading transformation with a minimum 60% average in management positions (up from 6% in 1994) (Southall, 2008). This includes civil servants of all types; bureaucrats, teachers, nurses and the like. And when there is a demand for

36 An issue that will be dealt with at length in coming chapters.

government to provide jobs there is likely some understanding of the fact that government pays marginally well (though this is up for negotiation every year around strike time), but most importantly provides job security (most government jobs are not on a performance basis and are very strictly protected by labour law that makes dismissal very difficult). However, the call is not for jobs of a highly skilled nature that might produce members of the middle class at the rate it has currently, but rather for wide spread jobs that might employ a good chunk of the terminally unemployed. The fact of this rather unspecific rhetoric parallels the curious situation of very unspecific intentions, plans or expectations of the working world by young people in Khutsong. It speaks to what seems to be an overarching, but difficult to grasp feeling that seems to capture not only the unemployed, not only the young, but perhaps them more intensely. It is difficult to pin down to a particular concept; but might be hinted at in being termed: wanting. Not wanting anything of the particular, but simply, wanting. For those who frown on the demand for government to provide jobs it is often referred to as 'expecting', sometimes, particularly in relation to the youth, 'entitlement'. But for all the, mostly, patient waiting, and the ways impatience acts itself out when it does, entitled seems too specific a term, as if these young people believe that they will eventually get. Rather, this state of being does not seem to have a visible end, it remains seemingly timeless, in limbo, like wanting.

This 'wanting' might signify a generational shift, or perhaps simply a time-mindstate shift. The phrase *ijob-yijob*, is one uttered by older people, in my experience over 55, quite often. Loosely it translates to *a job's a job.* It's most often used when mentioning a negative element of a job, or complaining about being tired, and effectively it states that a job, as a way of making a livelihood, overrides any difficulties and frustrations it might entail and that having a job might in fact means one should expect and accept its integral difficulties. The fact that it is undoubtedly an utterance of older people[37], and the fact that it is in stark

37 Ijob-yijob is uttered by older black people in particular and so apartheid labour practice and persecution should be taken into account. For more on the role of wage labour in South Africa historically see Barchiesi (2011).

contrast to the more contemporary preference of unemployment over a ‘bad’ job, signals a definite change in conceptions of what people are willing to do and how social and political change has meant people imagine different possibilities. For Gorz, writing in 1999, the realities of post-Fordist labour systems meant that there was no option but to shift our conceptions of wage labour as an unquestionable marker of self worth and belonging, no matter its form. To him, the sense of ijob-yijob

> is an enormous fraud. There is not and never will be ‘enough work’ (enough paid, steady, full-time employment) for everyone any longer, but society (or, rather, capital) which no longer needs everyone’s labour, and is coming to need it less and less, keeps on repeating that it is not society that needs work (far from it), but you who need it (1999, 57) .

Gorz indicates here that capital, in its current form, precipitates unemployment, and therefore precipitates the sense that employment is a favour, that capital does for the individual, and that *any* work is enough.

Barchiesi however makes a stunning point about the nature of Western (and include here Gorz’s) perspective on unemployment. In Gorz’s statement that there will never be enough wage labour for anyone *any longer* he points to a very particular understanding of unemployment and society, and that “proceed[s] from assumptions that stable waged employment constitutes a historical norm, which is now undermined by conservative macroeconomic policies” (Barchiesi 2008, 124).Here Barchiesi indicates that for societies of a colonial heritage, and Apartheid heritage added to that for South Africans, the idea of full, stable employment is a foreign one, and that in fact it would not be a historical norm to see wage labour as a form of social upliftment. Rather wage labour is synonymous with forced migration, oppression and abuse. According to Barchiesi “African workers have not necessarily seen employment

precariousness as the condition of disempowerment and hopelessness often described in Western debates" (2008, 125). Therefore Gorz's idea of the enormous fraud comes from a deeply privileged position, one that the 'utterer' of *ijob-yijob* has little connection to. Further, Barchiesi indicates another shift in thinking about wage labour, in that those involved in labour unions of the late 1980's and the strong role they played in the anti-apartheid movement would have a strong sense of the possibilities of wage-labour connection, or class solidarity. However in a new dispensation in which the expectations of labour movements have been largely dampened by state adoption of neoliberal economic policies, the views of labour power have shifted[38]. We could read this to mean younger generations, not akin to the fervour of the labour movements in the 1980s, would not share such sentiments. This is profound for our considerations of contemporary wage labour in two particular ways – it indicates in young people who choose not to compromise, a sense of Western ideals, a break with historical lack and a sense that current realities should afford them globalised, and effectively first world, privileges (the fact that these no longer exist even in the first world not withstanding). It also indicates that young people, even if aware of historical practices of class based political action, find it difficult to connect to such concepts due to their own experiences of labour or non-labour as it might be.

For Gorz and his Marxist ideals, the lack of mass based wage labour is most problematic in that it signals a tragedy for possibilities of proletarian action. Barchiesi points directly to a loosening of a sense of class solidarity and trade-union muscle in his work on precarious liberation (2008, 2011). He states that unemployment, low-wage and in particular casual wage labour has significantly weakened workers sense of class distinction or wage-labourer identification, "undermining the meaning of wage labour as a vehicle for social advancement". Though in slightly different terms, Barchiesi, like Gorz, marks a disturbance in social relations due to the absence of stable and long term work. As mentioned

38 This is discussed in more detail in chapter 4.

above, the lack of substantial wage labour dictates the lack of many of the rites that indicate place in social society, particularly in the sense of coming of age (marriage, home building etc). The extent to which someone is not recognised or appreciated because they do not engage in wage labour (or not consistently) and therefore do not contribute to their surroundings effectively means that "precarious employment ultimately invalidates the imagined nexus of wage labour and social citizenship through the loss of meaning in subjective experiences of work" (Barchiesi 2008, 124).

This is not to claim that work and wage labour do not still play a strong role in the expectations of normative roles of youth, and the processes of coming into adulthood. And I would certainly say that despite the complex political history of wage labour in South Africa, it is still very much a part of the imagined normative roles of productive citizens (which Barchiesi 2011 argues against) – unemployment is still referred to as a 'crisis'. And Bafana too, feels work will help him be more useful, more a part of society; to pay for his brothers fees, to stop drinking too much alcohol, to fix his house and start a family. However, I would argue there seems to be some shift in the way some young people are communicating about wage labour and ambition. It is not necessarily a completely radical break but perhaps oscillates, not quite one, not quite the other.

For the youth of Khutsong this means navigating between Arendt's *Arbeitsgesellschaft* and 'something else'. Gorz in 1999, advocates freelance work as a solution that is somewhat independent of capital's chains, not loyal to companies worked for for decades, and not defined by their jobs. This idea (very particular to a time, and I am sure retracted in hindsight of Generation X's failures and the recent recession) is thoroughly utopian and limited by the upper-class liberties that few young people in Khutsong could really claim. However solutionless, young people in Khutsong do seem to have made claims for choosing to denounce the commitment to wage labour's relationship to social relations and belonging. I do not claim that this is a fully considered Gorzian

dismissal of post-Fordist manipulation by capital, or fully considered political stand point of any other form, but its differentiation from the norms of meritocracy and wage-based society should be noted.

Barchiesi too states that “rebuilding working-class politics as a progressive actor will require workers and their leaders to come to terms with, and think of alternatives to, the limitations of facing waged employment as a vehicle of social emancipation” (2008, 138). Young people in Khutsong, by choosing no work over any work, seem to be making a significantly different choice to recognise that wage labour has existed in problematic terms historically, and that contemporary terms of wage labour are often not significantly better. And that, most significantly, they choose not to be determined by the norms of wage labour associated social normative belonging. Wage labour, therefore, stands at a point of being too limited, effectively too elite, to act as a major rallying point of social connection and associated voice – and political mobilisation projects will need to consider this.

For many young people in Khutsong, the understanding is that life should not be ‘impossible’. For Bafana, this means he should not have to live in fear by taking a job underground, for another it may be that one should not have to withstand the racist abuse of a superior. For many others it’s the expectation that a job should pay decently, or at least provide the possibilities of skills growth and accompanying decent pay in the future. And just any job seems an acceptance of nothings, a resignation to waking each day to work to feed oneself so that one might be able to work again the next day. Meaning the mind becomes so dulled, so exhausted, so abused by such an environment that other possibilities become difficult to imagine and there is certainly not time to make them happen. For many, wage labour and the material gains it attributes, is about so much more than feeding themselves. And succumbing to wage labour without chance of gaining these things only really happens when certain turns of events inspire a

sense of desperation, but this doesn't often last long. A need for something more complex, inevitably overturns this, like a restlessness, a wanting.

Bongani and I sat at the Market many times, but the first time I met him, it was at the steel works, across the road from the Market and about 15 metres from the pavement, in a clearing that cars use as a makeshift road to get to the most southerly part of Skopas. The steelworks is a makeshift building made of much the same materials as Petros' Market. But it's less contained; a few open sides and a much higher ceiling so one can stand comfortably in it. There, a number of middle aged men weld and construct steel gates, palisade fencing and burglar bars. It is quite a lucrative business and a number of the young people at the Market had attempted it at some point, apprenticing and hoping to get good enough to start their own. This steel works was apparently a little unprofessional, and they couldn't charge as much for their work as some of the others in the area. We stood there, accompanied by one of the welders, an elderly and rather frail looking Rasta man who sat and listened and interjected with two or three word additions every now and again. Both he and Bongani smoked ganja throughout the interview, and I wondered if this was perhaps part of why they struggled to maintain quality in their products.

Bongani is 29 and was born in Khutsong, to a mother from Khutsong and a father from Swaziland. He has lived in Khutsong all his life. In his interview he launched straight into the fact that he did not know his father, and couldn't speak SiSwati, and therefore didn't know himself. A number of young people in Khutsong had parents from Swaziland, mostly migrant labourers who worked at the mines who had begun lives in Khutsong, most which remained unfinished. Bongani never knew his father and lamented not knowing where he was from, and therefore being unable to know where he was going. Unemployed, Bongani left school in Standard 8 (or Grade 10, an average age of 16 or 17) and has worked intermittently but 'not much'. Bongani was specifically insightful about being in a state of wanting, something he referenced almost immediately;

> we must be obliged to something, and some positive things. We are just living life, we're just living. People are trying to live to the fullest at a very fast pace. Life is obviously fast now. And its something else you know. Twice as much acceleration. So we die early, we die young in a very immeasurable amount.

This need for obligation, to be assigned a responsibility to something or someone, was for Bongani his history, culture and tradition. He hinted at a sense of discipline he felt tradition might compel in him, that he would feel it was his role to abide by, because he had a reason, an *obligation*. Wanting is situated in material goods, cars being perhaps the most readily identifiable. Young people want to be able to wear 'label' clothes and have fancy cellphones, preferably more than one – and those who make it do. Wanting is also situated in social connections, in the possibilities of marriage, an impossibility without the ability to pay for a traditional wedding, a white (or western styled) wedding, lobola *and* a home as this is generally what is expected of a man to provide. I was once told there are no weddings in Khutsong (a non-truth actually), that people in Khutsong just make babies, "they don't know that babies are also expensive". A sense of normalcy or 'normal-ness' is perhaps what Bongani references here, a hankering after what might be considered normative.

For Berlant, normativity should be seen as " something other than a congealed space of aspiration toward privilege...[but rather]…an evolving and incoherent cluster of hegemonic promises about the present and future experience of social belonging that can be entered into in a number of ways" (2007, 278). These promises are made to the self and by the self about conceptions of aspiration and wanting. For Berlant (2007), these are usually fantastical; for in the case of youth attempting to find significant wage labour in the post-Fordist era and develop normalcy in the face of increasingly low paying, low valued wage labour, or perhaps none at all, only fantasy can accurately portray their conceptions and

keep them on an endeavour for that sense of normalcy. Fantasy is unequivocally located in a sense of wanting, in desire and daydream. Fantasy also situates wanting within the unreal, and perhaps for many these items or life linkages of longing are unreal. However their significance should not be lost to a sense of un-attainability, the term fantasy should not discredit the weight behind its consequences. Berlant continues, “how do fantasy-practice clusters such as those we’ve seen become the grounds for political and social conservativism?” (2007, 278)

Because wanting is finally, and very clearly in Bongani’s statement, situated in a political understanding, of self and power and influence, of recognition and respect. Bongani continues:

> Especially this thing, voting. Elections and stuff. I never [laughs]. I don’t recall voting”… [“propaganda government!” exclaims the old man]… “I believe I want to have more insight about doing such things. I don’t want to be used. I don’t want to be such a victim [laughs]. I don’t have to. I don’t want to be used. I believe I should have enough information about such things. I want to feel inside my mind that I believe. I want to do it with confidence you know. I don’t want to doubt such things when I vote. I want to know what I am doing. I don’t want to vote because they say voting is that and that. I want to know what power does it have. I want to know how valuable is my vote and what will happen to it in the future if things don’t turn out the way I was told.

Bongani repeats the words “I want” and “I don’t want” twelve times in this quote. And rather than an indication of a spoilt child who demands things, Bongani is unequivocal about a sense of self understanding, self clarity and an associated respect. Though giggling relentlessly throughout because of it, this is not a ganja

induced philosophical rant. Rather, Bongani is quite clear about his responsibilities to self and to state.[39]

To what extent this sense of responsibility is acted upon, and in what ways it's given platform to, remains a vital question. For many a theorist, existing outside of the formal economy means one has no significant physical or social space to act out their political identities. Berlant states "the lower you are on economic scales, and the less formal your relation to the economy, the more alone you are in the project of maintaining and reproducing life. Communities, when they exist, are at best fragile and contingent" (2007, 280). This idea constitutes wage labour as a basis for community identity, social relation and, for Berlant, the very essence of maintaining and reproducing life.

This can easily be attributed to a shift in socio-political landscape, a generation who grew up on 'know your rights' campaigns, freedom talk and 'youth are the future' statements, born of a new dispensation that began speaking this way organically but was also constructed for the purposes of state interventionist nation building and reconciliation. The effects of a post-1994 insistence on socialist inspired equality and institutional support cannot be denied. It was of course, also influenced by a world-wide shift in rhetoric synonymous with the baby-boomer generation, born of hippy self-love and taking neo-liberal individualism in Oprah-type popular media and the economy, to its height. The extent to which a generation before this set up an understanding of social imaginaries and constructed the acceptance only, of human rights and individual freedoms, and thus instilled a liberalist individualism and perhaps expectation that denies the whole, will be discussed further in this dissertation. But there remains a slight snag in the theory, and that is that none of the young people I spoke to believed the state would assist them, all expected that the only way to really become wealthy was to be politically involved in the correct party and have

39 This interview was my first with a young person, unemployed and chilling on the corner. Perhaps one of the most poetic and insightful, it, like many others after it, exposed a very complex relation to state and participatory citizenry and ultimately influenced my research interests immensely, evident in the theoretical focus in this paper henceforth.

the right connections, and that effectively they were forgotten and would remain that way. There is an intersection here in believing in self, in rights and freedoms, and believing simultaneously that these rights, and all they afford, are not actually for me. Imbedded in this state of wanting is complex negotiation of self and particularly the young self; but is also a negotiation of relations to state and to history, a current dance with inheritance and its actualisation. Bongani ended our discussion with;

"…things won't get better. Nothing is promising. I also can't have high hopes. I'm just living."

2. of khutsong and the state

Tsitha had been introduced to me some months previously as “Mantashe”[40]. Apparently they had a lot in common. They certainly don’t look a lot like each other. While Mantashe is short and rotund and frowns a lot with a protruding chin and pursed lips, Tsitha is tall and gangly with a wide smile and light feet. We had gotten to know each other pretty well in the following weeks. At some point we were sitting at a new market a few blocks from the Market. It’s just at the entrance of Skopas, on one of the two forks of the main road into Khutsong. I had been introduced to the two young men running the newly established market, KG and Dumisani. Dumisani was Tsitha’s friend. Tsitha, who always spoke in positive tones and always had a plan or a project he was busy with, had currently gotten an idea to build a car wash right next to the market. He and a friend were clearing the ground with a spade, getting rid of the stubborn rhizomes of the grass, so that it was flat and smooth. They were thinking of even laying some cement to make it really professional.

A few weeks later, I passed by the market and the levelling seemed to have stopped half way. Dumisani explained to me that there had been some issue with the man who owned the land nearby. Tsitha arrived shortly. He was terribly disappointed and quite stressed, upset at the man who was interfering with his big plans. You see the market was situated in the same clearing as the Score and the Excel (the only two formal commercial centres in Khutsong – that are owned by the same man). While the man had not bothered the new market guys in the two or so months they had been operating, he took notice of the extension plans and the spade work being done on a patch of land he claimed as his own. Tsitha was despondent, he felt people who did well in the township never helped other people grow, he considered them greedy and tight-fisted. He said the man was only taking notice at that point because he knew the carwash would do well; he probably wanted to charge them rent and make money off of them. This Tsitha was willing to do, but it depended on how much, and when, because he

40 Gwede Mantashe is the current SACP chairperson and the ANC chief whip. I never did get any more clarification than there being ‘a lot of similarities’ between the two. I guessed it was some inside joke.

would need to use the initial profits to build the business and wouldn't be able to afford the rent until the business was 'proper'. Dumisani felt differently, and without the emotion or distress that Tsitha clearly held in his voice, Dumisani calmly pointed out that a certain number of meters from the street belongs to the government – so they were more than allowed to operate there and didn't owe him anything.

After this discussion I noticed all markets sit just on the street. As mentioned previously this is because that's where people move and how to get people in. But at the same time, there are many spaza shops and places that sell food based in people's private garages or as I once experienced, from someone's kitchen door with makeshift seating in the back yard. Thus these markets' precarious perch on the edge of the tar (actually more often extended dust) must definitely be part of a negotiation of property rights and claims to public space. Dumisani asked me outright; when it was that I would interview him. I was pleased to have someone eager to be interviewed, and considering his clear views on public property – I figured he would probably be interesting.

Dumisani and I sat inside the market for the interview. In between he would sell things to passersby as his partner KG, sat just outside the market with friends. Dumisani and KG have been best friends since they were little. They used to play together and they lived in the same street. When they eventually started school they were in the same class, and this was generally the case through their schooling. KG got his matric, Dumisani did not. But they stuck together as friends, attending parties, hanging around. Eventually, Dumisani says quite calmly but also very seriously, they ended up in crime, 'house breakings and stuff you know'. Dumisani and KG were both part of a gang of local 'tsotsies' and did basic petty crime. Dumisani did have a gun at one point, but he never actually used it. Both were known criminals in the community;

> It's bad you know, for your mother to know that you are a criminal. And my father and my neighbour, they would tell me I must stop this thing. And I wanted to. But there was no other options. KG and me, we didn't have anywhere else to go. But we sat down and we said, "no man, it's time to stop this thing", you know. So we started the market.

Dumisani and KG used the bounty off a particularly good crime spree to buy their first apples and sweets. They were duly supported by their families, who were glad they were embarking on an attempt at the straight and narrow. Dumisani's father, worked as a taxi driver, assisted him every Saturday morning to buy goods for the market for the coming week. The morning of our interview, Dumisani was late because he was out buying stock. He arrived in his father's bright blue taxi and climbed out as KG pulled out boxes of veggies and meter-and-a-half long bags of brightly coloured chips. Once off-loaded, we settled down to our interview. Dumisani gave me the low down on the territory issue.

For Dumisani, there was no way that the rich man could claim ownership of that particular patch of land. Dumisani stated that from 'here to here' it was the government's land, and anyone had a right to be there and did not owe 'anyone' rent. Dumisani said the rich man could claim ownership of all the rest of the interior land, including the makeshift football pitch, the area around the Score and the Excel garage - and so he should have, according to Dumisani, "he's a business man after all". But he can't claim the edges. Where ordinary people precariously balance their bets on making an honest living.

> This land belongs to the people because it's government land. We are not doing crime. We are creating our own jobs. We are being entrepreneurs and we did it all by ourselves. We didn't ask him for help or for money or anything. We have a right to be here. He can't move us because it's not his land.

According to how Dumisani perceived it, you didn't pay rent if it was government land. Public space therefore, is available to those who use it productively and it is sovereign. Dumisani did not feel threatened by the power that such a rich man would yield (though Tsitha clearly felt a little powerless in this case). Rather, he saw his rights to state access as an upright, clear standing citizen of productive means as undeniable and entrenched. Even though Dumisani's claims to citizenship and legal legitimacy were tenuously founded (they effectively stopped being 'criminals' only a few months prior), he considered himself now part of a community, and a valued part at that. And for this reason he expected his rights to be protected, he expected government to afford him some leg to stand on[41].

Dumisani is a young man perched on the edge of precarity. He has a low level of education, no formal work experience, no formalised income and a history of crime. It is from this position of precarity that Dumisani develops his relationship with state, one of provider. This provision is not an active provision or an immediately relational provision, but rather the space to make do for oneself. This is a relationship at once connected and at the same time disconnected. In the broader scheme of Khutsong, definitions of what the state is deemed to be and on what terms its relations with its citizens should stand are very complex. The demarcation debacle of 2005 to 2009 is certainly most indicative of this.

Demarcation was a forced removal, not in the Sophiatown or District Six sense[42], but a forced removal nonetheless. In which an entire community was moved, without their approval or support, beyond a border to the North West Province. They were moved, by force, for reasons of local governance, bureaucratized urban planning and economic geographic renegotiations. It differs from the Sophiatown and District Six versions in two marked ways: the people didn't move, the boundary did. And it was done in a time of 'democracy'; and then

41 For an interesting discussion on 'decency' and the correlative call for rights see Ross 2010,,who looks at the role of housing in concepts of belonging, decency and legitimation. See also Jensen 2008.

42 For wider discussion on the historical forced removals of these two 'black spots' see Lodge 1981 and Beyers 2007.

challenged wholly for its undemocratic practice and challenged in variantly democratic forms.

Demarcation hangs over the whole of Khutsong, heavy and unrelenting, and everyone mentions it, all the time. I don't think anyone realised the extent of the pain, anger, frustration and sense of betrayal of the community, I don't think the community realised how the enactment of these emotions would shift so much of its social understanding of self, of state and of community. But today, most are at pains to develop new narratives, don't want to be defined by it, don't think it was worth much – something of a battle won, at great cost, and a war completely lost.

In mid-2005 the Constitution Twelfth Amendment Act was adopted, phasing out cross border municipalities (Bernstein and Johnston 2007). Merafong City Local Municipality could therefore no longer straddle the boundary between Gauteng Province and North West Province; Khutsong and Carletonville of the former and Fochville, Wedela and Kokosi of the latter. This also included some farms and mining territories. In August 2005, Minister for Provincial and Local Government, Sydney Mufamadi issued notice that Merafong City would be incorporated into the North West Province (Bernstein and Johnston, 2007) – this is said to be as per instruction by the National Executive Committee(NEC)of the ANC (Bernstein and Johnston, 2007). The process, as per legislative procedure, is that this would then be up for right of reply and submissions of appeal by concerned parties. Such was the case as taxi associations, ratepayers associations (mostly from Khutsong) etc. insisted Merafong be part of Gauteng (Bernstein and Johnston 2007).

Towards the end of 2005 after numerous applications, public hearings assessments and formal impact assessments, the local government portfolio committee in the Gauteng Provincial Legislature issued a statement that Merafong not be incorporated into North West Province but rather into Gauteng (Bernstein and Johnston 2007), much to the relief of many Khutsong people. This

was seen as legitimising of their argument and surely, if Gauteng Legislature supported the people, there could be no reason to move. Yet, that same Legislature, about a month later on 5 December 2005, approved the Act incorporating Merafong into North West Province – against the recommendations of its own committee (Bernstein and Johnston 2007). This confusion was then repeated at Parliamentary level when the Parliamentary Select Committee on Local Government and Administration recommended that Merafong be part of Gauteng, which was overturned, without explanation, with Mufamadi and the National Council of Provinces finalising Merafong's status as officially part of North West Province.

For local community members this was unfathomable and a sense that senior governing structures had 'already made up their minds' became wide spread. This had immense repercussions for local feelings toward governance structures and 'so-called consultation', as it became evident that within high powered decision making processes, procedure and formal recommendation were cosmetic at best and at worst, being blatantly ignored. If there was chaos on a provincial and national level, one can only imagine the chaos at local level – within the community and amongst local councillors where individual faces, people next door, were being held accountable for decisions being made and counter made, way above their heads. Power relations, internal and non-transparent coercion and what seemed to be a complete lack of regard for local voices bred an extremely mistrustful and resentful population, determined to act against the state. The sense of mistrust, even paranoia, is still evident in Khutsong today – and the anger, well many say its 'rising again'.

The main claim against incorporation into North West was an economic one. For many in Khutsong, moving from the economic centre of Gauteng to the North West was destructive. There was a clear sense by all that Gauteng was the economic powerhouse of the country and the place of opportunity, to be removed

from it would be to have opportunities put further out of reach. This was a sensible fear.

In 2005 North West province contributed 6,4% to the national GDP, whilst Gauteng contributed 34,3% top of the log with KwaZulu Natal in second place at much lower 16,4% (Stats SA 2011). Gauteng is clearly the economic powerhouse of South Africa and consequentially the centre of its social and economic functioning. Beyond Gauteng's borders can arguably be considered at varying degrees of the peripheral. The location of the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, the headquarters of the mines, the banks and the majority of major industry and commerce means Gauteng is the province of means. North West by comparison has a lower urban density, far more agriculture and lower income.

North West is also less developed in its administrative capacities, resulting in lower quality services in the province. North West province at 9,4%, is considered amongst the highest provincial incidences of severe malnutrition. It is grouped together with KwaZulu-Natal (13.3%) and Northern Cape (9.8%), with Gauteng considered amongst the lowest with 6%. (Stats SA 2010a, 32). Gauteng has some of the highest proportion of beneficiaries of free basic electricity at 41,6% with North West Province nearing the bottom of the log at 19,8%, second only to KwaZulu Natal (Stats SA 2010a, 34). According to the General Household Survey (Stats SA 2010b) literacy levels were almost three times lower in North West Province than they were in Gauteng and there are at least 800 000 more cases of social welfare in Gauteng than in North West, despite North West's evident by higher poverty levels.

Similar senses of inequality were felt on the ground and rumors of these sorts of statistics spread. Some argued that to be moved to North West would mean they were further from the North West centre governmental, and would have to travel further to apply for birth certificates or handle housing issues. At one point it was ascertained and used in arguments against demarcation that while Gauteng

processed new Identity Document (ID) applications every day, the North West only did so once a week (Ndletyana, 2007) (the sheer outnumbering of Gauteng ID applicants by population statistics alone was clearly not being taken into account). Many later indicated that there were visible shifts in service delivery when Merafong reallocated to North West; this included a schools computer programme that had begun in Khutsong as part of a Gauteng Province Department of Education programme that was prematurely halted because the North West didn't have a similar programme. I heard of alleged instances of teachers and nurses being paid less after becoming employees of the North West Provincial Government rather than Gauteng. When one walks through Khutsong it is difficult to find traces of the North West's presence. All one notices are the old vandalised spaces and burnt down buildings from the protests, and a torn down sign that says "Welcome to Gauteng" now erected in someone's yard. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the library was the only place I found some hint, in which the most interesting and most recent books had North West stamps in them, dating them at the period between 2005 and 2009 - after that, nothing. While I am sure there were some tangible signs of difference, the reality of the fear of being cast out into the margins makes the difference all too real.

This is not to insinuate that the threat was of the loss of abundant wealth. In fact, according to the *Provincial Indices of Multiple Deprivation* report, in 2005 the most deprived wards in Gauteng Province were found in Westonaria with its close neighbour Merafong City, deprived to a marginally lesser degree (Stats SA 2006). Merafong had thus always existed on the precarious margins of the centre, and was in a position of some substantial deprivation regardless of their inclusion in Gauteng. Their fear at being cast out was in fact the fear of being cast further, with greater obstacles in the path of their access. Further their engagement with the issue of demarcation was made from the point, not of the included or the powerful, but rather of the peripheral and the precarious.

This engagement began to take the form of protests, peaceful and discursive, held prior to November 2005 (Bernstein and Johnston 2007). These were led by the Merafong Demarcation Forum (MDF), a group of local community leaders, many of whom had previously been local councillors[43] and some had a history of anti-apartheid local civic involvement in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The MDF was structured as a non-party aligned community movement that would represent community voices as elected government structures no longer fulfilled this role. It had a women's league and a youth wing. Though non-partisan, and acting somewhat within the new social movement networks, the MDF was lead by a charismatic local teacher, Jomo Mogale who had been an anti-apartheid civic leader. He was a leading figure in the Khutsong branch of the South African Communist Party (SACP). This connection led to a surprising choice by the SACP, who had towed the ANC line relatively consistently due to their alliance, to resist the demarcation decision, with many nationwide SACP leaders voicing their support and the visit by Buti Manamela, YCL leader, to Khutsong.

After the blunders of governance procedure and the rising resentment, protests became increasingly violent. Much of the violence was enacted by youth, and the YCL, in particular, was instrumental in leading youth protest. Violence took the form predominantly, of vandalism of state (or municipal and therefore state by association) owned property. This included the majority of public infrastructure and amenities such as the swimming pool, the stadium and the library. These were torn apart and their raw materials looted in some cases or like the library, it was simply set alight. Many roads were blocked with burning tyres and other obstructions, blocking entry or exit into the township. Homes of councillors were set alight. The resentment and conflict over the violence, between the differing leadership styles (older and younger), and what was considered the motivation behind leadership and protest are today still a terse point, particularly between

43 This later became a point of contention as leaders were seen to be acting on the part of the community for personal again and in aid of personal vendettas.

generations. The conflict has had immense repercussions for intergenerational politics today[44].

Rather, we might consider how this community, which acted against incorporation into North West (Carletonville was far less perturbed), figured its own sense of protest identity and understood its role in participatory citizenship. I do not begin to claim a utopic mass uprising, that Khutsong achieved a singular identity, or that there were no counter voices or political clashes. Quite the opposite really. But the Demarcation protests included men, women and children of all ages, many of whom took to the streets recurrently over the four years, and a number who, if not actively protesting, provided supporting roles of other kinds. From my own research, I would estimate a 90% anti-North West Province sentiment, even if not actively protest based. And everyone says, the whole township was part of it, “we were united”. The sense of relatively long term community participation in protest (from late 2005 to early 2009) certainly indicates something quite specific about this community and this issue.

For people in Khutsong, demarcation could not be seen as apart from their right to exist, their very identities. Place, its precariousness and its contentious politics were at once made for them and defined through the opposition of this making. For if you don’t know what side you are on, don’t know what rights you might claim as your own, and have little recourse to determine your surroundings, you exist in a state and place of precariousness. Through the very fact of the decisions made by the NEC in 2005, and counter made and then made again, it was made clear that questions of belonging were already complicated and not necessarily cut and dried. This is partly because of bureaucratic issues around administration of cross-border municipalities, but this cross border nature is effectively the issue at hand. The cross border nature indicates from the beginning that these towns and townships didn’t really belong anywhere, and this

44 The issue of generational politics will be discussed in a following chapter.

municipality was an organ of administration effectively created to take up the leftovers, those at the precarious edges of real places.

I was baffled by the discussions of demarcation with people, their demands of the state, their horror at being ignored, their sense that they should be listened to and would violently destroy all state infrastructure until such a time that they were. I would think to myself time and time again: Why do you think the government should listen to you? The government is really important, they have a lot of power, and there are many other little townships like yours that are unhappy, what makes you feel the state should take you seriously? We might ask Dumisani similar questions as he negotiates his somewhat disempowered position as an informal trader in relation to claims of state provision of land, for this precarious place of *not quite* – not quite ever belonging, not quite ever having been provided for, not quite being an outsider either, not quite left to your own devices – seems to be a powerful place from which ordinary people are able to claim their citizenship and their inclusion while demanding some autonomy; as if because they are never assigned one or the other by the state, they are given creative licence to use this position to their advantage.

Dumisani's response, by a young man who otherwise owns very little, and has little leg to stand on in broader senses of value, power and socio-political importance, constitutes a micro example of the bigger explosion that was demarcation. For Dumisani, with the rest of Khutsong, has a distinct experience of state 'abandonment' and repression. But also of the possibilities of engaging the state and reigning it in. Dumisani holds strongly to the promises of his citizenship, of what citizenship theoretically affords him. Should he and Tsitha have taken the issue to government structures (they never did, Tsitha gave up) however, and found that citizenry rights can be rather difficult to access in the face of an incapable or moody civil servant, not to mention the true legality of setting up shop on appropriated state land, Dumisani's claims to counter-power may have been shaken somewhat. And he knows this, for he and the rest of

Khutsong have had the experience of being left out in the cold, un-addressed and unrecognized, supposed citizenship in hand. Dumisani's bold claims are symbolic claims, a point of argument rather than inference. This claim, though perhaps not practical, is influential still; it is a claim to intimacy with the state. This intimacy exists however, with the always conscious notion of the possibilities of opposition to it. This is the *not quite* position from which a precarious balance of powers is negotiated.

This relationship with the state, of precarious, perhaps even oppositionary connection, but intimate and possessive concurrently, is the position of a people of a certain kind of state and certain kind of citizenship. Of which Khutsong is especially illustrative. This state is not that of conventional state theory, and as Chaterjee has lamented in his polemical statement "citizens inhabit the domain of theory, populations the domain of policy" (2004, 34), requires a theorising from the position of those who experience it. In so doing, we are able to consider the in-between spaces of state experience rather than state structure, and understand the precarious space people occupy when engaging the state.

Foucault places our contemporary reasoning of the state in the seventeenth century emergence of the 'art of governance' or governmentality by which the state's omnipresent and unquestionable existence and purpose is established (Ophir 2010). He refers to the emergence of the concept of *raison d'État* by which the all encompassing reason of order, control and governance are afforded a legitimacy that exists even beyond themselves. This legitimacy is not given or taken but simply exists, in what Lefort would refer to as the empty place of power, de-bodied and not susceptible to ownership (1988, 17). It is from this place of reason, that state discipline commands its rationality (Burchell et al 1991). Within a post war era normative western state functioning, it is feasible that the state might be thought of as unquestionable, as consistent, as reasonable. The case with South Africa and Khutsong may not be as easily argued.

Ophir argues that today, “the state as a real entity can be found almost everywhere” (2010, 74) appearing in its functionaries of lawmaking and politics which “soon was reproduced by citizens, who adopted this discourse for purposes of speaking back to power, trying to limit or undermine its authority, seeking its help, or attempting to seize it. Today, even when one is not talking directly to or about power, the assumption usually remains that the state subsists as that purportedly whole and definable ensemble” (Ophir 2010, 74). Progressing from the reason of the state’s existence is then the reason of the state’s role in society. To which Foucault has attributed the concept of *governmentality* which has extended the state as power and dominion, to the government as a system of bureaucratic procedures, the most efficient, cost effective ways to function and provide for the state’s subjects. Foucault’s *governmentality* does away with the binary opposition of ruler and ruled, considering them as created through each other and through practices of relation such as figures of speech, forms of knowledge and self disciplinary practices (Burchell et al 1991). The state is, according to *governmentality,* everywhere and all encompassing, permeating all essences of life and action. And it is the core of Foucault’s argument to warn against the control and pervading dominance that *governmentality* produces.

However once again the case with Khutsong seems not to fit within the norms of state and governance theory based on western examples. If we are to consider the reason of the state for example, and the broad based acceptance of its automatic and unquestionable existence, Khutsong is perhaps akin to this. For no one in Khutsong made claims for secession or even an overturning of the state. Rather they chose to engage the state on the grounds that it was the all powerful and supposedly provisory structure under which citizens stand. However at the same time, it was *reason* that Khutsong was questioning. Khutsong claimed the state was acting unreasonably in choosing to move Khutsong to North West Province. They claimed the state was acting without

reason in their responses to their citizens when their citizens objected. It was unreason, Khutsong claimed, that was the basis of a degeneration of democratic principles that the state was enacting without reasonable recourse. The automatic sense of the reason of the state and on these grounds, the immediacy of their power and rights to force and control is challenged here.

While Foucault guards against governmentality, and the pervading dominance it affords the state, Khutsong sees it differently. For in fact, Khutsong was demanding to come into closer relation to the state, to be closer to its organs of operations, to have its techniques of dominance situated within their parameters. Service delivery is after all the presence of the state and some of the outlets through which the state stamps its dominance and sets out its influence. Whether it be better roads, state designed schooling, policing and other infrastructure – the state is able to infiltrate and manipulate movement, access, thinking and influence through 'service delivery'. And Khutsong is demanding that it wants the state where it is.

When we consider the Khutsong situation there is a slippage from the concept of *raison d'État* and of *governmentality* that does not quite match the frames that western theory assumes. While reason may define the state's existence and the roles and responsibilities of governments and citizens in principle and then quite rationally; in practice the relations between those who govern and the governed often unravel into far more irrational relationships of affect resulting in a negotiable relationship of power, less clinical than Foucault's *governmentality* might suggest, that while never a complete undoing of the established hegemony undermines its very foundations. And yet at the same time while western theory warns against the trapping of the reason of the state and its associated abilities for governmentality, it is this that people are choosing to call on, that they see as a lack due to the very unreason of the state.

Western state theory then, can help us to recognise the relations of power and negotiation at play between citizens and the state, but do not necessarily act as a guide for the nature of state/citizen relations outside of the particular dynamics and context of much of the west. We look then, rather, to post colonial state theory for some explanation of the very particular nature of state and citizen relations in an entirely different dynamic and context. While there is a dearth in the range of theory on the post colony as state, Mbembe's exploration of the post colony affords us some inroads into rethinking reason in particular.

We might begin at the very point of reason, for as Mbembe[45] has argued, the postcolony is constituted predominantly by unreason. It is this unreason that at its commencement, fates the postcolonial state to a domain over power of a different kind. He posits;

> Conflict arises from the fact that that the postcolony is chaotically pluralistic and that it is in practice impossible to create a single, permanently stable system out of all the signs, images and markers current in the postcolony; and that is why they are constantly being shaped and reshaped, as much by the rulers as by the ruled, in attempts to rewrite the mythologies of power. This is why, too, the postcolony is, *par excellence*, a hollow pretence, a regime of unreality. (Mbembe 1992, 8).

Mbembe epitomises the pretence and unreality of the postcolony by the act of *commandement* and the act of excess. *Commandement* is a term to define the form of postcolonial state power as that of the autocratic and unquestionable. A

45 Mbembe's Provisional Notes on the Postcolony (1992), and the extended later publication of the On the Postcolony (2001) have received much criticism from various corners of postcolonial studies. These are predominantly concerned with a somewhat strange relation to Bakhtinian carnival theory, a penchant for pessimism and the associated lack of agency he affords ordinary Africans for change. Much of this is accurate, but his work, as one of his foremost critics Weate (2003) alludes to, affords otherwise unprecedented possibilities for analysis. In particular, it affords a critique of power and citizenship in Africa that figures from the detail and is therefore more usefully applicable than the broader theoretical precepts of conventional state theory. See Kalström (2003) and Weate (2003) for relatively strong critiques, and Zegeye and Vambe (2009). A good lot of the critique while masked as reviews and textual critique is less on his argument and more on his role as an African academic and therefore interesting for other reasons, but somewhat weak on textual analysis.

legacy of the colonial authoritarianism, the *commandement* suggests a relation of basic roles of instruction and the carrying out of instruction, with no space for any discursive instruments. The application of the *commandement* is as apt in the case too, of the apartheid state. *Commandement* comes to signify the tool of hegemony and control, for Mbembe a symbol of unreasoned, unrestrained power, the buffoonery of post-liberation power play that mimics its abhorred predecessor, "*commandement* in the postcolony has a marked taste for lecherous living" (Mbembe 1992, 6). The *commandement* is not simply an act of exerting power, but also defines with it a series of thought processes and conceptual ideas that come to define a whole state's way of thinking.

The *commandement* might help us to understand how rule and power are exercised in a place characterised by the *not quite* and the precarious, how in a regime of unreason and unreality information is posed in aggressive reaction to the disorder, attempting an enforced clarity and control. Conversely this *commandement* in itself denies reason, rejecting explanation or counter rationale, creating that which it hopes to overcome. It stands in direct contradiction to the concept of governmentality which figure on subtler, more underlying forces of state than the overt and ostentatious *commandement.*

The demarcation might be considered as quite like *commandement*, an example of the blatant imposition of power that is exercised unequivocally, with little space to manoeuvre. In the midst of its own unreason it is challenged by its own organs and denied flatly, as if there were never any possibility of discourse or democracy. This *commandement* represented a state, or state governing powers, that had come to read of themselves and project to others a myth of representivity and paternal indisputability, indistinguishable from right, afforded them by their historical championing of the liberation struggle. This is not the subtle role of the government that uses understated pervading techniques to infiltrate its people. Rather it is overt, self confident in its historical legitimacy. People in Khutsong refer to it by one word: arrogant.

Then Defence Minister Mosiuoa "Terror" Lekota has come to symbolise in a single man, the arrogance and unreason of the state. In early 2006, Lekota arrived somewhat unannounced in Khutsong, in an attempt to ‘speak to the people’ to clear things up. Lekota’s presence had been framed as an imbizo, devised after a traditional form of caucus amongst elders in which historically, important clan decisions would be made, always through concensus. The tenet of an imbizo is the respectful and even handed discussion from which clear resolutions would be made; a contradiction in terms, for what followed was all but respectful and even handed.

A number of community members refused to attend the imbizo and encouraged others not to. Those who did attend were largely from the informal settlements, mostly retrenched miners from the Eastern Cape (an ANC stronghold). This angered residents, who felt these people were establishing themselves as outsiders, and they began to chant songs and disrupt the meeting. Lekota’s response was a good indication of how unattuned the state was to the severity of the situation and how unaccepting they were to any form of insurrection. Lekota marched outside the stadium on foot and yelled at the protesters, when they became aggressive, and at the request of security personnel, he marched back into the stadium and began to lambaste the leadership of the anti-demarcation protests – insisting they should lose their jobs (those employed by government such as teachers). He referred to the demarcation protests as “anarchy” and unequivocally denied any possibility of a return to Gauteng. Reports claim he then stormed into a local tavern in which Jomo Mogale was having a drink, confronting him for misleading the community and insisting he tell Khutsong to vote (Seepe, 2006).

The response was unexpected. Lekota was lambasted by local community members, led by elder women. Some of the community began throwing rocks at him and his entourage. Women who were able to squeeze through the police

circle surrounding him screamed and cursed at him, one reportedly spitting on his face as she spoke, he pitifully trying to quell her anger and argue his point, she, unrelenting, yelling and angry. An elderly woman is reported in a newspaper article as saying “I was one of those who chased Lekota. He is a huge elephant and I am just a mouse, and yet I made him run” (Philp, 2009). Soon there was the burning of tyres and the police were responding with rubber bullets to the onslaught of pelted rocks. Many were arrested. Lekota was whisked out of Khutsong by police escort, as were the informal settlement dwellers who had threats hurled at them by onlookers. As one local journalist reported on the event; “Lekota's gung ho approach was doomed from the start, the ANC's knight in shining armour has succeeded only in further poisoning the atmosphere” (Tabane 2006)

This kind of *commandement* is one of the many that Mbembe refers to. An apt example cited in his work is the case of a couple in Cameroon, exhausted and waiting for their transport, who fail to rise as the national flag is raised in a public space. Because of this, the man is beaten terribly in front of his wife by local authorities. Mbembe remarks that “It is with the conscious aim of avoiding such trouble that ordinary people locate the fetish of state power in the realm of ridicule” (1992, 9).In Mbembe’s account there is no retaliation by the man, his wife or any possible onlookers, as Mbembe makes an argument for passive forms of dissent, such as ridicule, in response to *commandement* that exist in the postcolony, one of the major points of his essay. What we might note from the above is how different the case of Khutsong is, it is one of a direct reaction to the *commandement* not simply passive ridicule. A claim against it, and against its arrogant repetition, against what seemed as if the state did not understand the first time, that *commandement* would not be accepted as an everyday part of life.

But it is the way in which the *commandement* comes to embed itself as a part of a societal dis-ease that perhaps remains, despite Khutsong’s objections. Mbembe states that ordinary people “become themselves part of a system of

signs that the *commandement* leaves, like tracks, as it passes on its way, and so make it possible for someone to follow the trail of violence and domination that is intrinsic to the *commandement".* This violence is not necessarily the violence of protest, though the use of excessive force is certainly not absent here[46]. Rather it is the violence of illicit cohabitation, "a relationship made fraught by the very fact of the *commandement* and its 'subjects' having to share the same living space… the necessary familiarity and domesticity in the relationship (Mbembe 2002). There is a violence in the unavoidability of the *commandement*, its control and its imposition on petty, every-day life in so intimate a fashion, whilst concurrently existing on the level of the unreachable, the all powerful and the oppressive.

For the reciprocated level of force and indignation and the recurrent structural violence that remains in Khutsong, and that was redirected toward Lekota, suggests an entanglement. While clearly oppositional, this engagement results in a relationship that is at once an intimate one. Mbembe suggests that "this double act of both distancing and domesticating is not necessarily the expression of a fundamental conflict between worlds of meaning which are in principle antagonistic"(1992,9).For both those in power and the governed are part of this precarious dance that inscribes them within the same episteme (Mbembe 1992, 10). This is the *not quite*, the connected but disconnected, the precarious relations of ones that are together but also apart. This is not a negotiation of dominance or a challenge to the hegemonic hierarchy (for it is taken as given that the state will rule) but rather a negotiation of the terms of engagement. Mbembe insists it is important to rethink the relations of the dominant and the dominated outside of the conventional binaries of resistance and passivity, autonomy and subjection, totalisation and detotalisation, rather we should recognise that the roles are played in more nuanced forms. There is a place in-between in which the binary models grow grey and the borders become murky – this creative space of the precarious, the *not quite*.

46Violence and its practice will be discussed further in the following chapter.

Chatterjee locates this precarious middle space of the *not quite*, that is a relationship but not one of obvious definition or concrete designation, in the realities of differential modes of citizenship, the fact that some people are more citizens than others. The precarious place is synonymous with a (partial) denial of citizenship. Chatterjee states many people are only tenuously, and even then ambiguously and contextually, rights-bearing citizens in the sense imagined by the constitution.

> They are not, therefore, proper members of civil society and are not regarded as such by the institutions of the state. But it is not as though they are outside the reach of the state or even excluded from the domain of politics. As populations within the territorial jurisdiction of the state they have to be looked after and controlled by various governmental agencies. These activities bring these populations into a certain *political* relationship with the state. But this relationship does not always conform to what is envisaged in the constitutional depiction of the relation between the state and members of civil society. Yet these are without doubt political relations that may have required, in specific historically defined contexts, a widely recognised systematic character and perhaps even certain conventionally recognised ethical norms, even if subject to varying degrees of contestation. (2004, 38)

Khutsong has a "certain *political* relationship with the state" that is defined in much the same terms as what Chatterjee describes above. It is left on the edges of what would be expected of normative citizenry rights; its inclusion into the centre is ambiguous at best. However it is not beyond the rule of state, not beyond *commandement* and is summarily subject to the state's force and whim. What Chatterjee refers to as relations of "a widely recognised systematic character" is the form of relational engagement that this kind of state relationship encourages. This is a relationship characterised by a simultaneity of claim and

disclaim, dependence and independence – rallied around the ethical substance of democracy and support for the weak – that remains at once in opposition to the state in form but a call for state inclusion in substance, all at the same time.

In the case of Khutsong this can be most clearly understood in that demarcation is acted against for being an imposition of state that undermines a people's efforts for survival. It is at a secondary degree acted against for being an imposition of state that undermines a people's claim to citizenry rights and democracy. And so in some way, the anti-demarcation protests were a claim to autonomy and self determination, direct instruction for the state to 'back off'. However, at the same time, anti-demarcation protests were at their core against the act of being excluded. Khutsong was at the core of their protests, refusing autonomy, demanding state involvement, requesting the state patronage that they associated with being a part of the centre.

We could almost draw correlations between this and the juxtaposition of wanting work and refusing *ijob yijob*. Here is a similar contrast of what would seem oppositional sensations existing as interrelated requirements. While young people sit desperate for work, unable to fully engage with societal normativity without it; they concurrently choose not to work for jobs they do not think meet their standards of dignified occupation, and further whilst they may demand 'good' work there is a sense they will never really get it. Similarly, the community of Khutsong bemoans the lack of state intervention in community development and demands inclusion into its centre, but is definitively resolute that the state removes itself from community intervention at the point of the demarcation debacle.

Khutsong takes this dance of inclusion and exclusion, the intimate and the oppositionary to its logical conclusion. Khutsong denies the state and its pseudo-democratic practice by boycotting elections. Elections, and the process of voting, had come to represent the ultimate act of freedom and democracy for South

Africa, grounded in the now famous images of snaking queues of millions of South Africans voting together for the first time in 1994. This symbol is therefore laden with righteous and celebratory weight. Khutsong uses this credence to back the intensity of their point, of their anger. They also use it to spotlight, brightly, the core factor of the role of the voting citizenry in attributing a ruling party any power, reminding all that the principle of democracy is the voice of the citizen. By doing so, Khutsong engages what they see as the non-democratic action of the state (demarcation) through an entirely democratic form (voting) of non-democracy (abstaining).

Local government, as a tier of governance structures determined as ‘closest to the people’, was established post-1994 as an attempt to engage grassroots democracy and community governance, intensified with the ward system in 1998 (government website) Local government elections are therefore representative of an involvement in democracy that should have direct and visible consequences, as people elect local grassroots leadership, often people they know and who therefore represent them– as opposed to the more distanced national elections that are perhaps more symbolically powerful. Khutsong boycotts the local elections in 2006. By doing so they engage what democracy is, how it was being enacted upon them and how they might enact their insurgent citizenship (Holston, 2007).

Firstly, Khutsong made clear the point that democracy, epitomized in the process of elections, requires ordinary people and their voices in order to be successful. Secondly, as a form of representative democracy had been forced upon them, claiming legitimacy through the election process, Khutsong denied any sense of legitimate representivity through not electing representatives. Lastly through majority action and very public (with much media coverage) action, Khutsong wrestled power, engaged their own legitimating narratives and effectively embarrassed the ANC. “of the 29 540 registered voters, only 232 voters turned up to vote, and 12 of those ballots were spoiled (Ndletyana, 2007).

This process was so successful in enacting a power battle against the ruling party that they were conveniently returned to Gauteng just prior to national elections in 2009. Many in the community are convinced that their threats to boycott the national election meant government was unable to delay any longer what was clearly an inevitable decision[47]. Boycotting the elections was effectively an act of engaging the problematic of democracy by disengaging with democracy, showing up its abuses by government. But at the same time, the boycotts were a significant choice not to realign their political allegiances or to 'overthrow' the ruling party. Rather, an ANC loyal community chose to renegotiate forms of governance, rather than the governors themselves. As Ndletyana states;

> They [leaders, and I would add the broader community] did not resign their positions within the party, nor turn independent. They remained within the ANC, but simply refused to vote as a protest – theirs is not a rejection of the party and government, but a contestation of who has the prerogative to decide on matters that affect them. (2007)

A choice to renegotiate forms of governance, rather than the governors themselves indicates a clear sense of a mutually constitutive relationship between state and citizen, in relations to citizenry rights and voice as well as demarcation decisions in the domain of governance. By using the elections, an absolute and incontestable platform for the voice of citizens, community members in Khutsong ensured that their voices that were being ignored were given state endorsed power through an institutional and processual state form. The state's response (though delayed) indicates recognition of their dependence on those they govern, for their constitution. This mutual constitution is not to say

47 I do not claim that the election boycott was the major force behind the shift in governmental approach. Rather a sense of complete self destruction, through violent protest, vandalism and school boycotts, coupled with complex internal political pressures were very a part of the overall pressure to return Khutsong to North West Province.

that the ANC is automatically part of the body of South Africa (though some may argue so), I do not mean to infer that another political party cannot assume the state, or occupy the empty place of power (Lefort, 1988). Rather I mean to suggest that for people in Khutsong, their negotiation with state is not one of oppositional difference easily resolved through the changeover of political party. Rather, there is a sense of a relational negotiation with bodies of power, senses of ownership and representivity.

Core to this is of course the question of the dominance of the ANC and this is an important point to consider. Very much a part of national discourse today is the question of why, even in the face of numerous protests against the state, and even in the very localities where these protests take place, the ANC remains the dominant party. There are various attempts at answers, varying from a 'struggle' allegiance to fear of ethnic and racial discrimination by opposition parties (Southall and Daniel 2009). For many in Khutsong, it would seem a connection was made between the ANC and their problems. Many referred to the ANC as arrogant (Ndletyana 2007). However the gripe was predominantly with how they were governed, rather than who they were governed by, why this is exactly, I cannot say but I attempt to unpack some of the broader questions of the political make up of the demarcation protests, and it's after effects in chapters following. At this point however, the issue remains with questions of voice, of self determination, of democracy.

This is a case of a people on the periphery, being shifted even further from the centre; enact their citizenship to bring the state closer. In doing so they shift considerations of a binary, and engage closely bringing the state into them, making clear their mutual constitution. There are two forms of relationship here that might seem contradictory, but represent exactly this precarious position that claims but disclaims all at once. Whilst the community comes up against the state and its display of power using effectively illegal and highly destructive, denying its right to (autocratically) rule and delegitimizing its authority and

destroying all symbolic traces of it; it too engages senses of citizenship, acts of formalised, legitimate, legislative process as a strategy of state negotiation and effectively demands full inclusion in it (in turn legitimising its existence).

The state's notion of itself and its relations seem far less nuanced, as Mcebisi Ndletyana clearly points out;

> The Khutsong case clearly reflects the ascendancy of the notion of representative democracy over that of direct democracy. Cabinet and parliamentary representatives are of the view that decision-making rests solely with them, a prerogative they believe derives from them having being elected to Parliament to represent the will of the electorate. They construe this not only as a mandate, but as one that lasts throughout the entire parliamentary term to represent the electorate as they see fit on any issue, and, as the case of Khutsong illustrates, without considering the input of local communities. The implicit assumption is that the elected representative not only knows better, but also knows what is in the interests of the electorate. Policy analyst Steven Friedman ascribes this to the government reducing democracy to service delivery. (2007)

But perhaps the analysts too, are too simplistic here, for the idea that democracy might be *reduced* to service delivery does not align with the complex negotiation of precariousness and citizenship that Chatterjee set out for us above, effectively the two are inseparable, as governance issues become issues of citizenship. The binary of democracy and service delivery is misleading. In so doing, it firstly diminishes protests against forms of, or lack of, governance, by not affording them the definition of an act of citizenry engaging democracy, an insurgent citizenship. Secondly it assumes that rather than an unresponsive, incapacitated government that does not engage appropriately with its citizen-subjects (as

clearly was the case in Khutsong); it defines the problem on the basis of theory and dismisses real politik. What is clear in the case of Khutsong, is that ordinary people are quite capable of complexly engaging both and demanding as nuanced an engagement from the state.

Dumisani's demand for recognition of land rights and access to making a living quite clearly indicates that for ordinary people, citizenship and service delivery are not mutually exclusive. Once again people are in a position that straddles two theoretical binaries that in practice are the direct result of a precariousness that requires that people be flexible enough to survive the *not quite*. Mbembe suggests that in the face of this sort of difficulty people in this position "have also had to have a marked ability to manage not just a single identity for themselves but several, which are flexible enough for them to negotiate as and when required" (1992, 5), Chatterjee figures it differently somewhat, stating that to 'effectively direct those benefits toward them, they must succeed in applying the right pressure in the right places in the governmental machinery. This would frequently mean bending or stretching of rules, because existing procedures have historically worked to exclude or marginalise them" (2004, 66). Both seem to have a degree of accuracy in the case of Khutsong, and of Dumisani. However I think that what these suggest is a kind of conscious pretence enacted according to the appropriate situation, which may be too simplistic. Rather, I would argue, this multiplicity, this ability to precariously juggle, complexly occupy contradictory terms in a single frame, is less an act, or a tool, but rather a state of being that is a response and the product of a position of precariousness and marginalisation. This state of the *not quite* anything specifically and singularly acts not only as a position from which people function themselves, but also as an approach to the elements that they engage daily.

Dumisani is a young man on the fringes, eking out a livelihood balanced precariously on the slither of land he attempts to claim as open to his access. This claim is a symbolic claim on his rights, his citizenship and his belonging; all

aspect he only partly believes in. for he knows that these claims are not quite what he voices them to be. This slither of land, on the edge, is the place from which he figures his own sense of being only partly powerful, only partly independent. And it is with this understanding that he figures the state to be only partly accountable to him, and partly accountable only to itself.

It is under a similar guise that Khutsong engaged the state on the issue of demarcation, expecting partly for the state to remain accountable to its citizens but reasoning too that the state is in some senses undeniable, accountable then only to itself. Situated in its space of socio-economic precariousness, it had at its disposal only the realities of its state of being, only the mind frame that retains that there are no absolutes. It would seem the state itself has more conventional senses of power relations and the details that constitute its make up – and therefore it attempts to remain at a distance, denying its mutually constitutive power possibilities. There is no doubt however, that protest was used by Khutsong, to bring the state a little closer.

3. on protest and inherited political formations

Khutsong residents: It's war (News24, 2005)

Khutsong 'a forced removal' (News24, 2005)

Khutsong residents attack mayor's house (News24, 2005)

Khutsong erupts in flames of fury (IOL, 2005 – Ndaba and Maphumulo)

Khutsong: Lekota faces uproar (News24, 2006)

Khutsong Boycotters stand firm (News24, 2007)

'We protest until Jesus comes' (News24, 2007)

Khutsong kids in violent clash (News24, 2007)

Rubber Bullets Fired at Concourt (News24, 2007)

Fuck the Oppression (hand written poster at the Constitutional Court, 2007)

The People Must Tell You (hand written poster at the Constitutional Court, 2007)

If I die bury me upside down so that the North West Province can kiss my ass (hand written poster at the Constitutional Court, 2007)

We sat in the driveway of a house that had been converted into a tavern. There was a group of five young men,a young woman and I. This had become somewhat of a group interview after a young man I had approached, Katlego, had been reluctant about being interviewed, but had said he would agree to 'just a conversation with a group of friends'. Four of the men and the woman were unemployed; one of the men was an artisan on one of the mines. None of them were particularly politically affiliated. We began

speaking openly about demarcation with the conversation led by whatever the group was eager to tell me. One of the young men, dressed in blue overalls unbuttoned down to his navel exposing his rather round stomach, was being difficult. He kept asking why we were here and what we were talking about, disrupting conversation and grumbling loudly, disagreeing with what people were saying. While I had noticed he seemed rather grumpy and uncooperative, I was preoccupied with the pace at which I had to write notes, three or four people speaking, sometimes at once and otherwise in rapid succession. Until he said rather loudly “you know what?”, and everyone fell silent, “these people burned down my house”.

The realities of the remnants of demarcation came rushing to our present place like a wave of memory and hurt, precariously and temporarily kept back by a wall of some very insubstantial material that had just shattered. I was shocked. I had not yet met anyone who had experienced the ‘other side’; in fact I must have come to think they had all left. I was faced with a highly problematic moment, having been completely insensitive to this young man’s experiences, involving him in a discussion of which he definitely didn’t want to be a part. I had no idea what to say. He continued, “they burnt down my house, and they are still my friends” and then he got up and left.

On his departure, the group continued with the conversation, seemingly un-phased. They seemed somewhat apologetic about what had obviously been a traumatic experience but referred to the burning of his family home as ‘unfortunate’. “He doesn’t know that it is us or not” one of the group said, not claiming innocence, neither taking responsibility. I got the sense there was a unanimous sense of anonymous responsibility taken for anti-demarcation actions, a kind of protective collective defence and pride at the same time. This defensiveness and pride at the same time, this description of ‘unfortunate-ness’ suggests somewhat of an ambiguity about the violence; a slight uncertainty about its conviction. “You see his mother was a councillor and unfortunately his house was burned, it was during the struggle, it wasn’t personal, he knows why it happened”.

I got the sense he did feel it very personally and his reference to retaining them as his friends seemed to suggest an incredibly complex relationship between senses of vindication and victimhood, once again an ambiguity about the role of violence and conviction over the protests themselves. Here, this man who has had his mother's home and belongings torched by his own community, by implication labelled as a community traitor, seems to have come to a point of tentative acceptance and is expected to see his role within the demarcation protests as necessary canon fodder. He is expected to come to accept that the destruction of his personal material belongings was merely a symbolic element of a moment much broader than his individualized being; and while some lamentation is tolerated, his reality was 'unfortunate' but necessary and therefore not really worth mourning. He is placed in a middle point between right or wrong, a *not quite* space.

There is something about vandalism and destruction that was more complex than a straightforward outpouring of anger and frustration. While we already know that most of the affected sites where symbolic; libraries, schools and government infrastructure were targeted first and foremost, but also cars with North West Province number plates and councillors homes; the symbolism of violence and protest goes further. These were objects that embodied a state they wished to destroy, but in so doing also engage. Protest, it would seem, was a way of bringing the state closer. While the burning of particularly libraries and classrooms garnered wide spread condemnation from people throughout the country[48] for being effectively self destructive, the sense from members of the community in retrospect, seems far more composed, somewhat more considered than simply consuming, chaotic anger and destruction. No doubt there was an element of the spectacular, of a form of protest that was consuming and excessive; but at the same time, reflection on its exact forms were nuanced and intricate.

I had initially come to Khutsong asking myself why the performative action of protest by young bodies had so vividly resembled the forms of embodied protest of the 1970s and

[48]A response to an article reporting on recent library burnings in Zandspruit in 2011 reads "Protester you voted these thugs into power. Now burn down yourselves not the schools" (IOL, 2011b)

1980s. School boycotts, petrol bombings, the songs young people had sung, their movements while singing them, were all starkly vivid re-enactments of protest forms of the mid-1970s to late 1980s. However it became clear to me that a much wider and deeper level of embodied violence was at play in Khutsong. The performed motions, actions and approaches meant far more than an unquestioned inherited dance, and had much deeper implications.

While demarcation slinks its way into many conversations, reference to the protest action was usually confined to pointing out the vandalized spots. Once, while driving past the stadium and its 6m high roofing, once covered entirely by corrugated iron, now only speckled with a few left behind shards, I marvelled out loud at how people had possibly gotten up that high and at such a strange angle to destroy it. Juka simply said, “people put it up there, people can take it down” and smiled a very broad smile. I had also heard that young men had been the predominant perpetrators of violence and destruction. I was struck then by a remarkable conversation I had with two young sisters, Palesa and Karabo. They related their entry into protest politics vividly, often with laughter and the conscious exaggerations of the kind that make a good story. I sat on the step at the back of their grandmother’s house in Batswaneng. They were braiding a next door neighbour’s hair, both at the same time, tugging left and right whilst the neighbour flinched in pain. Someone was hammering next door so I struggled to hear through parts of our conversation. Eventually they sent the neighbour out for a break, the hammering magically subsided and they sat on either side of me on upturned crates. They spoke in the most profound details about the protests. Not about the ideas, the motivations or the frustrations. But about the action, the emotions, the moments; in a way that no one else had been able to express, though many had been there too. They spoke retrospectively, perhaps even nostalgically; as if they were not in their early twenties. But this was not a naïve nostalgia, and there was a sense of some discomfort, some hesitance and unresolved feelings about what the protests had come to mean for them.

Palesa and Karabo were in Grade 10 in 2005, when the first of the upheaval began. Karabo was attempting Grade 10 for the second time, after having done grade 9 twice, and so she and her sister Palesa were now in the same grade even though she was older. Initially, the protests didn't breach the school walls and for those who turned up for class, school work went on as normal. It was nearly the end of the year (the school year ends in early December) and they were focused on finishing it and passing. However this didn't last long as exams were disrupted and classes stopped. And all were expected to join in on the action.

Youth were at the forefront of protests right from the beginning, being some of the first to be arrested for looting and vandalism. Palesa suggests that many of the first protesters were already non-school goers, though a few may have been the type who rarely pitched up for class. By the 3rd of November 2007, approximately 50 young people had been arrested for looting, whilst thousands of people of various ages met in the stadium, which was to become the central meeting point for community and leadership to air their grievances and discuss their intentions. (Bernstein and Johnston 2007). Palesa indicates young people were predominantly considered the foot soldiers and most radical, being the advancers of petrol bombings of councillors' houses and municipal buildings. Both Palesa and Karabo speak vividly of the very young protestors who ran the street blockades, using found objects and fires, and running what were effectively child-administered check points, defining points of entry and what constituted rights to enter;

> Some young children, they also, at the robots, down at Skopas, they will sit there and put rocks. If you [a car] want to pass, 'give us 50c or R1. Give us money'. It was their [the children's] jobs, that money they will buy paraffin or petrol so that they can get them [Petrol bombs] … we were surprised when you see children, 'if you want to pass give us money', they were maybe 12 [years old] or 13. But they [the community] were supportive, I think they wanted to help because others, they went to work so they were giving those children money … it was even worse when you

> have number plates from North West, they tell you that you are supporting North West … they were putting rocks, old beds … and I think that money, they take it to someone and that person will by petrol, for the march.

The idea that elders who drove cars willingly gave a few Rands to children who ran guerrilla roadblocks as a fund raiser so that young men would have funds to buy petrol to make petrol bombs, indicates an interesting orchestration of multi-generational networks with the various age based strata acting in differing but related forms. Violence and destruction, it would seem, were the prerogative of the age group between about 12 and 30, mostly male. An interesting phrase, “it was their jobs”, as if all were attributed some responsibility in the action – a full commitment on the part of the entire community. Of course this was partly because most schools were closed because of the violence and children had little else to do. By the end of December, the homes of the mayor and the councillor had been stoned, some of them petrol bombed. Municipal buildings had been set on fire, including a library that was destroyed and electronic equipment valued at over R8 million stolen or vandalised. Residents burnt T-shirts with the president’s image on them and ANC membership cards (Bernstein and Johnston 2007). Schools were vandalised, including at Badirile High, where Palesa and Karabo had just passed their Grade 10.

By the beginning of the next year, youth involvement in the protests was at an all time high, with the YCL and the Congress of South African Students (Cosas) in Khutsong taking the lead in youth protest and receiving support from their national bodies. In February 2006, hundreds of students, mobilised by the YCL and Cosas marched in a manner reminiscent of anti-apartheid youth protests of the 1970s and 80s (Bernstein and Johnston 2007). It was at this point that Palesa and Karabo were removed from Khutsong ‘for their own good’.

Palesa and Karabo were called to where their mother was staying. Though the sisters were both born in Rustenberg, Palesa in 1990 and Karabo in 1987, both had grown up in Khutsong. After the death of their father in 1990, their mother moved to Khutsong

where Karabo attended Nayabuswa primary school and Palesa joined her later. Both went on to Badirile High, where Jomo Mogale was a history teacher. During demarcation protests Badirile was constantly being targeted by student boycotters, insisting that no students attend school. Palesa and Karabo's schooling was therefore intermittent due to the protest disruptions and their mother feared for their safety. Much to their disappointment, as they did not enjoy being cooped up in the house in Rustenburg whilst watching the drama of their community unfold on television. Karabo laments jokingly;

> This time when I was at my mother's place, eish that day my heart was broken [laughs]. You know why? [laughs] Because at that time they robbed Score, so you know when I watched, yoh I can see people are taking anything you want [laughs] in the Score super market. So you know, eish, I was not there! [laughs].

Both Karabo and Palesa then shout in unison;

> We are hungry now, its lunch time. LET'S GO TO SCORE!

The way they shouted this slogan, and then burst into laughter, seemed almost as if "LET'S GO TO SCORE!" had become some kind of widely known joke. To claim her heart was broken and not being able to be a part of the ransacking, was clearly also somewhat of a joke. A number of people had mentioned the Score looting, always as a joke, mentioning "a friend of mine that ran out with one loaf of bread and a tin of pilchards" or another who "ran out with a 20k bag of pap", all ridiculing the event, but somewhat proud of it nonetheless. Once again there is a sense of pride, but also of some discomfort – as if the jokes are an attempt to cover what may be contradictory feelings about ransacking a shop for 'political ends'. *Score* is now a *SaveRite* since closing after the vandalism, but is still referred to as *Score.* This is likely simply for convenience sake, a name familiar to all that still denotes the place where people might meet before heading elsewhere, regardless of whether it's still the name of the place. We shouldn't jump to assume it occupies some symbolism, a kind of retained memory. But then again, it is common practice to use the name by which everyone knows

something regardless of change, it seems rather run of the mill, something that might happen in an ordinary neighbourhood under ordinary circumstances of change. The fact that all still refer to it as Score, nonchalantly, not recognising that Score is no longer precisely because it was looted and trashed during the demarcation protests, seems slightly at odds with the extent to which demarcation otherwise remains in the minds of many. “LET’S GO TO SCORE!”, exists only as a joke, or as an otherwise amnesiatic request in very ordinary discussion. Through humour there seems to be an erasure of some sort, a discomfort with a past perhaps.

Palesa and Karabo continue to laugh when discussing issues they also seem to feel a bit more serious about, such as when discussing their schooling. It was on their return from Rustenburg in 2007 that Palesa and Karabo were most affected by the violence and schooling issues. They also got involved more directly in the protest and their political views and activities have been shaped by the year as it unfolded.

Matric, or Grade 12 – the final year of school, is often given undue importance in the career of a student. Passing matric, a phenomenon that is printed in the major newspapers for all to see should they wish, becomes the sole focus of at least half of the grade 11 year and certainly all of the matric year, two thirds of which are taken up by mid-year exams, preliminary exams and finals. The pressure put on students can often be too difficult to bear, with a passed matric indicating tertiary education possibilities, and very clearly, employability possibilities[49]. For Karabo and Palesa, both taking on matric in 2007, the pressure mounted exponentially as schooling disruptions, and protest action took them from their studies. Both explain that their matric year was very difficult, and has had adverse effects on their lives that they both regret. Karabo had taken Biology, English and Business Economics on Higher Grade, with Geography, Economics and Setswana on Standard Grade. Palesa had taken Biology and English on Higher Grade and had also taken Maths, Science, Geography and Setswana. Palesa reflects on some of their difficulties;

49 Students have been known to commit suicide on hearing of their failure to pass matric, see “matic results in newspapers traumatic” (Dube, 2011)

> 2007 was the worst year. You go to school, you come back empty. Its your first year in matric, you just bought your uniform and you are obviously excited and in the end you get nothing, you just go to Taung (all laugh). We were very worried, it was very hectic. We didn't have text books, we paid the school but they didn't give us books. Actually in 2007 for matrics there was no school, up until Taung. It was stress you know!

Palesa and Karabo laugh again and the mention of Taung, which was "all they got" – once again their words are accompanied by an apprehensive laugh, perhaps defensive against what they perceive as inadequate assistance. "You *just* go to Taung" is an interesting reference as it was, other than police presence and a few visits by ANC leadership, the closest they got to interventionist reparative state action. The North West government had decided to intervene in the problematic education situation. They put as many matrics as would come onto busses and sent them 350kms South West, to a small town called Taung, in a major catch up session to make up for the 8 months they had missed.

> There were lots of us, but some didn't. Other people, they were threatening us. "If you go to Taung, we will burn your houses". Others were comrades[50] so they didn't go to the North West… we were there for three months. Ja they fed us, they even gave our parents money to come see us… there was no chance you could learn here in Khutsong. If they see you going to school they will just harass you… the teachers also went on strike.

The Taung programme was a last ditch effort by the state to ensure a generation of kids were not left with a full year of no schooling. The programme, highly inadequate and unprepared, got a few students through matric. But Palesa is adamant that most failed, more than before. And those who did pass, passed badly, with fewer matriculants going

50 the term comrade refers to people who were very actively against the demarcation issue. It connotes a kind of radicalism and commitment to the cause beyond the generic commitment of the community.

on to tertiary colleges and universities. Palesa is not only adamant that most of the matrics who did pass are now unemployed, but that there was also a higher level of alcoholism and teenage pregnancy amongst a year of students who had too much unproductive time on their hands whilst in matric because there was no school. Karabo failed matric in 2007, having been unable to cope with the lack of schooling and having struggled to adjust to the Taung Programme.

> We studied eight until four. After four o'clock, five, six o'clock was supper. After supper was study[51]. You read, by yourself. You read, read, read. And if you don't understand it's up to you. And our portfolios[52], because they called here [to Khutsong schools] and asked for our portfolios and there was nothing. So we didn't have year mark. That's why many failed.

The matric year is made of a 40% to 60% ratio of year assignments and tests to the final exam. Because students in Khutsong had had almost no schooling, there had been no assignments or tests, there were no grades from throughout the year and the exam mark could not be supplemented with year work. Palesa and Karabo mention friends of theirs who had always done well at school and hoped to gain bursaries but did not due to the lack of schooling. After failing her first attempt, Karabo like many others, rewrote her matric in 2008. But her results returned the same. She had had no supplementary tuition, there were no rewrite support programmes and so most were simply repeating the struggles and failures of the year before. Though Palesa did pass, both she and Karabo have been unemployed since, braiding a neighbours hair for a little bit of cash every now and again. They spend their time at home, indoors, watching television mostly.

51It should be noted that many of the students didn't study quite so hard. A number were involved in conflictual interactions with Taung residents which made it into the news, profiling the level of antagonism and conflict Khutsong youth perpetuated.(News27, 2007)

52 Portfolios were part of the matric syllabus in which assignments done during the year served as part of the overall year mark with a slight emphasis on exams. This meant students who had difficulty with exam writing could rely somewhat on work done under less strenuous circumstances to buffer their marks.

In the aftermath of the demarcation protests there seems to be a sense of resigned abandonment, as if their situation, not of their own making, has disadvantaged them immensely and there is little support to address this. They are now in a space, much like the young man whose 'friends burnt down his house', where they must attempt to continue on, despite the ambiguities left behind in the shadow of demarcation. They approached the Tshepo Themba development NGO in Khutsong in early 2008 and again in 2009, where they registered as work seekers for development training.

> They say they are having skills about the computers, nursing, plumbing. But last time when we did go there, we did register what we want to do. But they didn't call us when classes are starting. So I don't know exactly what they are doing. These people are hiding information for the society.

Palesa and Karabo remain part of a reading group that began as a study group which served as a point of peer assistance for what was otherwise a dismal year in 2007. The group continues today and has developed broader interests such as politics and environmental issues. In particular, the study group made connections with a number of new social movement organisations, mostly in Johannesburg, and this serves as their only major pastime and their only connection to resources, activity and people outside of those in their direct vicinity (a point I will extend in a following chapter). During the protests however their political associations remained very much insular, influenced entirely by the actions of their community. Both Palesa and Karabo became very active in the protests, somewhat during their matric year, but particularly in 2008.

> In Maxhoseni there was the robots side, we called that the parliament. That's where we met and talk, we strategized that we are going to burn tyres and we'll burn them here and here and here. All of us we just came with an idea [for where they should go next], we just shout [laughs].

Palesa's description of a kind of democratic free for all 'just shouting' conjures up images of mob crowds and chaos. And yet she uses the word 'strategise', which implies

a systematic, organised and tactical planning, a very deliberate destruction with specific targets and envisaged outcomes. The word ‘parliament’ is interesting for the same reasons, as it connotes a formalised decision making site, and theoretically, democracy. No doubt this was a conscious claim on power and legitimacy, and in direct conflict with the ‘real’ parliament that they were against. Karabo continues;

> There were a lot of people you know, during that strike a lot of people were supporting… you can hear the singing that people are going out now… especially at night, mostly we did much as the sun sets [laughs]. It was nice you know. It was like that, now [during the day] you rest [laughs], you don’t go to school, you don’t do anything, you just sleep. And then at night! [laughs] You just, it’s just like a job [laughing], a part time job, just to win the victory.

Karabo mentions that they were active as the sun sets, which almost feels like a kind of ritualisation, as if protest was highly procedural. Once again interesting concepts are used here to indicate some kind of formalisation in the face of conventionally assumed chaos. Karabo refers to a part time job, almost like a duty – similar to that mentioned previously in relation to the job children had of garnering ransom through their road blocks - once again referencing a kind of ritualisation. But again there is laughter that inadvertently suggests that the ritual is not automatically assumed or accepted in hindsight. She continues,

> We would get assignments, take our books [home], leave our books there, and go and protest. When we come back, that’s when we start, [remembering] “eish, I have an assignment” [laughs]. Then you go back to the books.

Palesa concurs;

> You just hear people singing and shouting, you leave your books; you open the door and go out…

The clarity and systematised programming is striking in the way the sisters speak of their protest action. There is definitely a sense of commitment. But it always seems to return back to the ordinary, as people in protest must switch modes and convene 'normal' activities and continue with their lives. The word "eish", suggests a regret or reluctance to return to homework, but also recognition of its necessity, and the difficulty of reconciling both. And perhaps the ambiguity of whether addressing one rather than the other (for whatever reasons) had affects that in hindsight, were not worth it.

To get a better sense I asked them to detail an average evening, step by step. Interestingly, Palesa began, unsolicited, with one of the most controversial actions, the burning of the local library. She explains;

> Today we going to burn tires, today we burn the library, today we do this, today we do this. And we do agree. Because we were so angry and when you are so angry you can do anything…at that time five minutes was enough [to get to the specific destination after deciding on it] [laughs]. Really it was enough [laughs]. If you can just see yourself there you know, fighting. You even don't care about the police, you don't even care about anything, ja… you just burn it and sing until the police come, most of the boys had the matches, they would do the petrol bomb.

Karabo continues;

> The police will come, there was a huge noise you know [laughs] when you just start singing. And they were patrolling. At the library they would just shoot with rubber bullets…only two people were [ever] shot badly, one in the eye and one in the teeth, the guy lost his teeth and that other guy lost his eye [after two gunshot wounds to the same eye]… the cops were not from here, they were from North West, ja. Because a lot of people who are cops here they live in Khutsong, they were supporting us. They [Khutsong police service persons] went to that other side and then that other side guys came this side. And I think they [Khutsong police service persons]

> were also scared that if they help [to police Khutsong] people will burn their houses.

Both Palesa and Karabo sound confident of their politics and the forms of political protest used. They seem convicted about the necessity and the community backing. At the same time however, the laughter insinuates some uncertainty. This ambiguity comes across even more strongly in relation to generational relations, those of support and those that seemed to figure party politics before people. Karabo continues, indicating that once the police have dispersed the crowd;

> You cannot sleep you know. We will hide and stop singing and stuff [laughs]. The cops go back to the police station [laughs]. We start again! We would hide at any house. Just knock, enter, wash the dishes or eat [laughter] and pretend like you are staying there and when the police come you say “no I was not striking, I was here at home” (and some others would climb the roof). They [people inside the house] they don’t do nothing. They know you are fighting for them. Eh! “come in my child”, especially older women, like the grannies you know, ja, because others are coming from work, they are tired, so you are the one, you are fighting for them.

At this point in the interview I had been astounded. A month or two prior, I had been at an adult woman’s home, she was probably almost forty. She described to me, in detail, evading the cops during protests in the 1980s against the apartheid government, by slipping into other people’s homes and pretending to wash the floor. She also said that she would be protected by the people living there, who would claim to any police officers who came knocking, that all the people in the house belonged there, and had been there all evening. Clearly there was some generational continuation, a kind of institutional memory that had continued. I asked Palesa and Karabo how they had known to do this and that they would be protected. Their answer was not very clear,

they seemed to suggest a mixture of automatic response “everything happens so fast" and pass on of information between peers;

> Everything happens so fast, you learn a thing, now someone tells you, maybe yesterday you were not there, someone says “yeh! Yesterday it was like this and this and this and we went into a house…”

There didn’t seem to be a direct sense of a generational pass on. Rather we get a sense of somewhat of a habitus, a kind of social climate that repeats itself through generations resulting in behavioural mimicry (Grenfel 2008). The generational relations within the demarcation struggle have been complex in numerous ways. Most particularly, it would seem, in the relationship between the political and the practical. It would seem young people were largely confined to the physical act of contestation whilst the political strategising remains at arm’s length and seemingly murky. The sisters are relatively vocal about this. When asked if they were part of any political party they were unequivocal:

> Big No! No! We haven’t even registered [to belong to a political party] because I don’t know am I going to benefit or what? Last time we registered. But there was no change.
> I really don’t like politics because many people are fighting over money and stuff so it’s not useful. Its better when you say you are a socialist, ja. Because we want to learn [about] all those things that are affecting the society.

Karabo indicates here that to call oneself a socialist is to commit oneself to ”the things affecting the society” rather than a conventionally political affiliation which she and Palesa denounce. Much of their political stance is made in direct relation to what they see as a complete lack in mainstream politics, introduced to them through the demarcation struggle. When I asked Karabo about the role of the political parties, particularly the YCL in the demarcation protests, and of political leaders such as the

YCL leader Buti Manamela's visit to the township and very vocal denouncement of the ANC's decision, she said she knew little about it. When I queried her on the details of the MDF's discussion with the demarcation board and how the government came to change its position, she said she didn't know the details. Their recollections of the protests are entirely community centred, devoid of party political narratives or sentiments and it would seem, largely uninformed about much of the political negotiation and party discussion and renegotiation happening at the time. In fact, there is a definite sense that young people were kept out of much of this kind of discussion, serving rather as foot soldiers, even cannon fodder;

> K: I think at first it was good because we all didn't want to go to North West but at the end when the demarcation was off, they didn't even want to go to jail and take those who were arrested. Those who were marching and all that, they were those who were at the front; and boJomo Mogale and all that were at the back, ja. They were using us.
> P: They were using the society.
> M: And who was at the front?
> P: Us.
> K: Us.
> M: Who's us?
> P: Youth mostly. There were a lot of young people arrested.

This sense of being used by protest leadership is quite different from the sense of support young people received from elders during protest and doesn't really reflect the relational information conveyed between generations. It is safe to assume that those elders who had bigger agendas and more to lose (such as the direct leadership who were vying for formalised roles as community leadership, like Jomo Mogale who ran as a councillor as part of the ANC soon after demarcation ended) were more likely to use whatever resources they could to ensure victory, whilst elders involved to a different degree might have different kinds of interaction with youth. Nonetheless, there is no

doubt a kind of continuation with the politics, and particularly the political forms of old. This can be tracked somewhat through Khutsong's political history.

Khutsong's political history is relatively recent, as the township was built in 1958 and was created in a cleanup operation of black spots[53] and farm labour slums in and around the Carletonville area. Growth in the area had attracted numerous people to the mines and local farms, as well as some of the industry and small scale commerce that had developed in the towns (Kulwane 2002). Khutsong was developed as part of broader urban planning for the area, by the peri-urban Areas Board, to sanitise and formalise black housing in the Carletonville area (Kulwane 2002). By so doing, the intention was to ensure provision for monitoring of the population, for alcohol brewing, pass book validity, gangsterism[54] and other 'unsavoury' activities. Khutsong, therefore, though a product of mine growth, is not directly related to the local mines (evident in its relative distance from most of the mines) but is rather the product of black urbanisation of the 1950s that had become a point of contention after the loosening of pass laws during the second world war (Hindson 1985). Khutsong is therefore an urban township made of the products, both positive and negative, of mass urbanisation and migrancy flows. Not a village, not borne of hostels or rigid labour, Khutsong was made up of a mixture of ordinary workers, independent and free roaming swindlers and the miscellaneous, and later of migrant mineworkers from other parts of the continent. This is imperative to our consideration of Khutsong's identity within early urbanization and the associated defiance and counter-cultural trends that were likely to have been part of the norm of early Khutsong society.

Khutsong's entry into politics is situated really just after the 1976 protests. Because it didn't have a high school it did not immediately feel the spread of student based protests that had swept the country after June 16 1976, but after the return of many boarding school based youth, recently concentised and often recently expelled because

53Black spots have been described above as multiracial communities that, such as Sophiatown and district six, were forcibly removed as part of the separate development policy of the apartheid state.

54 There was reportedly a strong presence of MaRassia as well as the Berlins and the Pirates (Kulwane 2002). For more info on black urbanization and gangsterism see BoTsotsi by Clive Glaser (2000).

of this, political action soon spread (Kulwane 2002). Though the Bantu Administration board had been in effect since 1971 in Khutsong it was only after youth disaffection, and the creation of the Community Councils in 1977, that any turmoil between community members and local governance authorities became evident (Kulwane 2002, 58). Even then, any opposition toward the lack of credibility of these local authorities, as satellite organs of what was a largely absent state - other than rates collection - was done from within and largely through formal 'legislative' channels. Disaffected community members with the intention of engaging a more productive Bantu Administration Board or Community Council body would offer their services on the board and proceed to voice their concerns (Seekings, 1993; Kulwane 2002, 58). Much of Khutsong's political action remains in this form until 1990 when Khutsong founded its first civic organisation. This is markedly late in comparison to other townships around the country (Mayekiso 1996).

The civic was eventually disbanded, along with many others throughout the country, in the mid to late 1990s[55]. But the format of the civic clearly resurfaced in the face of demarcation. The MDF functioned as a multi party, civil society organisation that focused specifically on local issues, a defining factor of anti-apartheid civics (Adler et al, 2000). Further, the MDF used similar formats of protest to anti-apartheid civics such as council rates boycotts.

But the early 1990s were significant in other ways too, as youth had taken centre stage of anti-apartheid action in Khutsong. This had become increasingly violent as young politicos took it upon themselves to protect their community from local gangsters who were being manipulated by the police and the Carletonville business elite to create chaos in the townships - a wide spread technique by some of white South Africa at the time to destabilise negotiations for a democratic South Africa[56]. One of the major aspects in Khutsong particularly, is that it would seem, the ANC had been arming youth in the township for community protection. As Morris records, though the West Rand was certainly quieter than other parts of the country in the early 1990s, by far the majority of

55 for more information on the demise of the civics with the coming of 'freedom' see Adler et al 2000 and Mayekiso 1996.

56 Khutsong also has a significant history of politicos themselves turning to Gangsterism, see Seekings 1993.

violent acts committed in the West Rand occurred in Oberholzer, the district that included Carletonville, Khutsong and Toekomsville. She continues on to say that “in the brief period between 1 and 31 January 1990 three Khutsong policemen were burned to death in three separate incidents, a black councillor’s home was petrol-bombed, and the homes and single quarters of black policemen were stoned and fire-bombed. These incidents accounted for 14% of police deaths in the entire country during that period” (2006, 68). In 1993 a number of ANCYL members and members of the Self Defence Unit (SDU) in Khutsong were charged and convicted for murder and malicious damage to property, crimes committed in conflicts between the local gangs and the ANCYL in 1989,1990 and 1991 (Morris 2006, 67).

A striking way to consider violent protest, youth and the ambiguities that result in its aftermath is through a particular conversation held between one of the young men convicted for murder and a judge at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) hearings soon after the new dispensation commenced. Three years after being jailed for the murder of the gangster, the two young activists filed for amnesty under the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act no 34 of 1995, resulting in a hearing at the TRC (Morris 2006, 67).

Rosalind Morris’ 2006 essay on the violence and the resulting TRC hearings explores the extent to which violence was perpetrated in South African townships, the extent to which it was normalised and in particular the relation between political violence and sexual violence. Her research details many aspects of this particular event including the forms of violence and some of the proceedings of the case, which included petrol bombing, street blockades and the like. However it is one particular part of the case that is particularly relevant to and somewhat reminiscent of the young councillor’s son whose house ‘was burned down by his friends’. Morris recounts a moment in the trial in which one of the TRC commissioners is perturbed and frustrated by a complex situation of language, position and the problematic of perpetration of righteous violence in discussion with a youth from Khutsong. The discussion goes as follows;

Judge Ngoepe: How did you ensure that people were not being attacked by the vigilantes?
Mr Faltein: We kept on guard all the time to make sure that everybody is safe, escorting people from the bus stops to home.
Ngoepe: If people were to be attacked what would you do?
Faltein: We would help them by fighting against the people who are trying to attack them.
Ngoepe: How would you fight those people?
Faltein: We would try and find out from them as to why they are attacking these people and try defuse the matter.
Ngoepe: How would you fight those people?
Faltein: We would try fighting them by trying to talk to them and we would fight with them after talking to them.
Ngoepe: That is not fighting, talking to them. How would you fight those people?
Faltein: As I said, that we would fight but we try stopping this person, but if they don't listen we would try to stop the person doing whatever they want to do [sic].
Ngoepe: Do you lack the courage to say that as a member of the SDU, if necessary, in defending the community I would produce a gun and shoot people who were terrorizing the community? Do you lack the courage to say so, if that was the case?
Faltein: I wouldn't just shoot people without a reason.
(Morris 2006, 71)

As Morris suggests, this discussion is an extraordinary episode of a complete mismatch of reasoning, in which two people with significantly different conceptions of violence and accountability speak right past each other. Ngoepe is clearly flustered in this conversation, straining to come to a point of equal footing and reciprocal understanding. For Ngoepe it is quite simple, there is a difference between talking and fighting. Fighting "is what happens when language fails for [Ngoepe]… Violence is the limit, the outside,

and the interruption of the political sphere… applicants [to the TRC] are, after all, granted amnesty only in so far as they can claim that they acted violently because the political was at risk" (Morris 2006,71). According to this logic, the violent and the political are mutually exclusive and it is when politics is endangered, when things have gone "too far" that people may reasonably turn to violence.

Associatively, because one would only turn to violence in dire circumstances, thus already being justified, the judge's accusation that Faltein 'lacks courage' seems to insinuate, perhaps not anything as strong as guilt, but rather insinuates that Faltein lacks conviction. And it is conviction only, that could justify a political activist's positive position (as it would be almost unquestionably claimed post-1994) being tainted by murder. It is conviction that allows for the good (talking) to turn to the bad (fighting) and still remain justified. Conviction that Faltein had done all that he could, conviction that the situation was dire, conviction that it was unquestionably an act of protection.

Faltein doesn't quite speak the same language. He states "I wouldn't just shoot people without a reason". Reason, it seems, is the crux of the issue here. And it is the crux of the discomfort of Palesa and Karabo, and ambiguity of the young man and his 'house burning' friends. What are the reasons for violence, do we remain convicted in the use of violence - the means to an end, and is the end good enough? Reason it seems, and certainly for Ngoepe, is tantamount to the legitimate and acceptable use of violence. But Faltein doesn't immediately make a clear distinction between reasoning and violence, talking and fighting. On being pushed he begins to suggest a kind of chronological phase of reasoning, "we would fight with them after talking to them". However the sense that talking and fighting could possibly happen conterminousl , that they are not necessarily mutually exclusive, that the violence of language and the violence of the gun are not necessarily different, lies at some level of unease and ambiguity in the way he figures his answers to Ngoepe's relatively straight forward questions. Reason, for shooting people, for figuring violence, is more complex than Ngoepe would like to figure it. Violence, it would seem, cannot simply be figured in the frames of an act of desperation, it might too be an independent mode of its own, with its own reason. The

point of desperation too, might be possible to renegotiate. Once again, young people place themselves in an ambiguous and creative space of the *not quite*, where polar senses of reason do not belong.

Here, the *not quite* is the space between reason and violence. This is not to say that youth in Khutsong are either violent or reasonable or reasonably violent. Rather they oscillate between these. And in the aftermath of demarcation, are questioning for themselves the levels of oscillation and their consequences.

Khutsong's extended history of political action is useful to understand the relatively recent history of political action there. This is important as it indicates a particular kind of history, largely dominated by the civic system that grew exponentially in the 1980s. Unlike many other parts of South Africa that had slightly longer and more immediately socially connected communities with a stronger tradition of political action, Khutsong's relatively more recent introduction to political action is coloured by the kind of action present at the time. For the extent of violence within anti-apartheid action had increased over time, losing a lot of the direct connections to the discipline and theory of the banned political parties and more recurrently taking violent forms (Morris 2006). Youth in particular were at the forefront of an ever more aggressive tactic, supported somewhat by banned parties and their leadership, epitomised in the 'ungovernable speech' by O.R. Tambo, president of the ANC at the time in 1984. The speech called upon township dwellers to make their townships ungovernable, a far cry from the peaceful civil disobedience tactics of the 40s, 50s and still largely in the 60s.

Undeniably this has a significant influence on Khutsong's position in terms of contentious politics. This is likely also the case for many other townships, both younger and older, but Khutsong's specific circumstances are no doubt significant. Perhaps even more significant is the relative recency of this kind of violence in Khutsong's political

history. For if activists were 17 or 18[57] in 1990 (as many where), at the peak of the violence, then by 2005 at the start of demarcation, these people are 32 and 33, perhaps some a bit older. By many accounts, and certainly by the definition of the South African government, these people would still constitute youth at the point of demarcation.

What this indicates is that while my initial questions had been why a 'new' generation had been engaging in 'old' political forms, the reality was in fact that the old and the new were not so significantly separate. Rather, what I had imagined as a generational gap being communicated across, imagining elders teaching youth to burn things, it was in fact peer to peer transfer that encouraged late teens and young adults to engage in certain practices of violence. No doubt there is the possibility that some of those same activists of the 1990s repeated the act 15 years later, in a different epoch.

One of the aspects that make this really clear to us, as mentioned previously by Karabo, is the fact that during the demarcation protests local police officers resident in Khutsong were removed from their community – a relatively unusual response to protest in the country. Newspaper reports indicate that early on in the demarcation protests, "a police officer had been badly burnt on the face during a petrol-bomb attack, four other officers had been injured, eight police vehicles had been damaged, paramedics had been chased out of the township" (Ndaba et al 2005). The replacements from the North West were clearly a tactic devised in response to the recurrent high levels of police attacks in Khutsong's recent history. The act of running into someone's house or hiding on the roof, an act that older generations have recounted themselves, becomes less of a shock here. Though Karabo could not recall the actual pass-on of this information, the possibilities that 33 and 34 year olds were in the protesting crowds and either re-enacted their strategies form the 80s and 90s or passed around word are more than likely.

57 Through personal correspondence, a Johannesburg based activist recalled a time when in 1992, she was called to see to young activist detainees from Khutsong who were being held in Carletonville. She recalls very young activists, under the age of 21 who had been tormented and intimidated, one claiming the police had placed a live snake on him during interrogation.

It is important to note however, that Palesa and Karabo make no reference to the apartheid struggle or associate their protest with that period. The young people I spent time with were seemingly a different political generation. There can be no doubt that those who came into political consciousness during demarcation are of a political persuasion that has distinct disconnects from the apartheid era. While theoretically many of the young people politically active in the early 1990s are still considered youth, the youth I spent time with (who would have predominantly been under the age of 10 in the early 1990s) do not make direct connections to that period[58].Demarcation is figured within a bounded cause of a particular place at a particular time. Palesa and Karabo's mention of going out into the streets, and shouting out at the 'parliament', of feeling trapped in Rustenberg away from the action and associating with loose political figurations of 'socialism', feels somewhat insular, as if their politics did not necessarily have wider relevance or cognitive transferability.

And yet, the protests against demarcation are referred to as "the struggle", the forms of school boycotts, rent boycotts, street marches, petrol bombings of councillor's homes, the use of dustbin lids as shield from gunshots, the songs that where sung, the techniques of evading the police; these are all re-utterances of the forms of protest of a pre-1994 period. There can be no doubt of a generational continuation. There seems to be in particular, a recurrent history of overt political violence. This is not the first time youth have taken up this form of embodied agency. The distinction between the youth referred to as the young lions, and the contemporary generation seen as lost to the courage and political stand of the lions before them cannot be fully made here. The violence these young people enact cannot be framed in the guise of unruly and destructive youth overreacting in a democratic dispensation. One issue that raises its head then, and that while difficult to answer is certainly most interesting for me, is the extent to which violence has become a normative and rationalised form of political action in Khutsong. If we think back to the young man who remains friends with 'the

58 An indicator of the ages of some of those arrested during the protests exists in a rather ironically titled police media report called "police successes" (LJ Jacobs, 2007) which puts the ages of six young men at 20, 22, 27, 19, 26 and 29 – most of whom are not within the afore mentioned age group of 1990s activists. Its interesting to note however, that the oldest of the group was the only charged with attempted murder and imprisoned for six years. Whether he had been involved in 1990s protest I was never able to establish.

people' who burned his house and the sense of resignation and inevitability that surrounded that conversation, we must ask what residues the recurrent levels and intensity of political violence that exist in Khutsong, have come to settle on its youth.

But this settlement is not a comfortable one. And just as Faltein struggles to articulate reason and violence, so too do Karabo and Palesa. The grand politics of demarcation, of burning and looting and boycotting remains a part of a trajectory of youth politics over some decades, but does not go unquestioned, is not simply assumed. Whether this is only in hindsight is difficult for me to say, but certainly, at some point, questions are asked and a sense that this is not entirely okay seems to settle in.

I am reluctant to fully claim that Khutsong has developed a habitus of contentious politics and reactions toward the state, and an apartheid era history of protest certainly doesn't prove this, as it is the case for the clear majority of the country. However there is no doubt that this place has very particular ideas about what constitutes right and wrong, the civil liberties afforded them by their citizenship, their right to enact these liberties and demand them, and interestingly here, the *exact ways in which this takes form*. But at the same time, in its aftermath, people become a little less sure, engage their realities and the realities of their actions in complex and uncomfortable ways. Is this a case of repeating violent protest and only questioning afterwards, perhaps for some? But perhaps it's also a negotiation with political formation, and state interaction in particular that young people are still attempting to develop a language for. And perhaps it is the very condition of contemporary politics and democracy, the particular make up of those who rule, that means that history is repeated and that perhaps there aren't very many other options. Perhaps these are the questions that lie in the uneasy laughter of Karabo and Palesa.

Perhaps this is the case throughout the country, perhaps this is the legacy of trauma and violence that most certainly lies in the lives all South Africans, who have had this dis-ease be a part of their daily lives and their inheritance over several decades, and for some, centuries. In the case of Khutsong we also can't neglect the fact that this protest

continued for four years, and thus was not simply a fleeting moment of violence, and its repercussions are therefore felt very strongly and over an extended period of time. But what struck me most about the young man's response to having had his home gutted by his community; was that he was both uncomfortable with the act, but resigned at the same time. And that his friends were too. And that in his moment of protest, of stating unequivocally that he felt victimised, he was also raising the conflict of being very much part of that same community whilst also feeling victim to its violence, "they are *still* my friends". Whilst at the moment of his outburst I was just shocked, in hindsight I am sure this young man was drawing to my attention the strange contradiction that seemed to breathe clearly in the lungs of the lives of people in Khutsong. That perhaps there aren't many other alternatives than this mid space of ambiguity and disaffection for young people in politics.

4. a revolution has its own compromises

I had been told a number of times by numerous people, that the SACP had hijacked the struggle. I was surprised then, one night, when one of the most vehement anti-alliance people I knew told me he was considering joining the Young Communist League (YCL).

Thabiso sat on his mother's pseudo-Victorian pink-floral and faux-wood sofa. I stood in the kitchen, waiting for the kettle to boil for tea. We were really in the same room, Thabiso's mom lives in one of the two roomed houses in extension three. The lounge, with the rather up-market sofas and glassware cabinet with plastic dahlia's in it; is differentiated from the kitchen by a 'wall-unit' of kitchen cupboards that rather than forming part of the wall, creates it. The kitchen is approximately three metres long and one and a half metres across, and packed with appliances and other necessaries of a kitchen, all precariously balanced on the very limited surfaces available. These include two microwaves (one of them was a recent gift and the other hadn't died yet and wouldn't be thrown away until such a time when it was necessary), a kettle, a mini-oven with two stove plates, a large fridge, two water buckets which are filled regularly due to the lack of a tap inside the house, a wash-bucket for dishes that is usually half filled with soapy water (Handy-Andy not dishwash liquid), a bread bin and canisters for tea and coffee. The kitchen loses about an extra half a metre because the door is usually open, except in winter when Khutsong is bitterly cold. Thabiso's mom is a manager at one of the two PEP[59]stores in Carletonville and therefore has a relatively well paying and stable job, hence the well filled kitchen. Thabiso did start a diploma in psychology in Johannesburg soon after finishing high-school, but he dropped out. He told me he didn't have the finances, his mom says he just stopped. Thabiso has not studied or worked since.

I had been stressing a bit about making supper. I stressed often because Thabiso's mom got home quite late after locking up the store, and being my host I was eager to make her life a little easier. I am not the most confident cook and the shallow hum of

59 A very affordable department store that sells mostly clothing, but also some household goods and cell phones. All of the goods are cheap, mass made imports. The fact that there are two in a relatively small town indicate its popularity, and the level of income (very low) of many people in the area.

the boiling water in the kettle numbed my mind into nervous calculation of the various combinations open to me with the limited contents of the fridge. “I’m thinking of joining the YCL” was therefore a sharp slice in the meanderings of my thoughts. I’m pretty sure the kettle clicked off at the same moment, leaving the room silent, tinted only by the dull thud of a house track playing somewhere nearby. I knew why Thabiso was thinking of joining the YCL, I had the feeling he had been considering his options for a while. He had looked concerned for a number of weeks now.

Thabiso is a *non-card-carrying* member of the PAC[60]. This is an important distinction in any party, having numerous implications and connotations. For Thabiso it indicated an ideological[61] affiliation rather than a party (and therefore political) affiliation. But all greeted him in the streets as MoAfrica (person of Africa – or PAC) and he spoke openly about supporting the PAC. I have never gotten to the bottom of the PAC presence in Khutsong, something I asked numerous people of numerous ages and affiliations. Not even its regional leader gave a satisfactory answer. But walking through its streets, particularly the informally settled parts, one would see the yellow-rayed black continent painted on the front doors of shacks and homes alike, almost like a bold claim to territory. And often where people would meet on the street corners, I would catch, in the corner of my eye or at a distance, the open palmed salute, sometimes with the other hand stretched across the part of the chest above where the heart would be. It’s not a wave. It’s a purposed gesture, made in conscious and distinct difference to the fist associated with the contemporary charterists[62]. It reflects an African-ness, associated with Ubuntu or communitarianism, and though seemingly less semiotically aggressive

60 The Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) was a break away congress founded by members of the ANC who did not agree with its non-racial policies. Lead by Robert Sobukwe. For more see Pogrund 2009.

61 I use the term ideological to infer a set of beliefs, especially those held by a particular group, that influences the way people behave (Oxford, 2005). I mean therefore, a set of political beliefs that my or may not relate to a political party or other politicised institution. These are largely points of political consciousness and may or may not relate to political dogma. I use the word ideological simply because in its popular usage in Khutsong “politics” is synonymous with party political power mongering and therefore connotes the negative and the scheming, rather than the ideological.

62 The Chaterists are those that associate there ideological underpinnings with the Freedom Charter. This is distinct from the tri-partite alliance, or alliance members which is the ANC, SACP and Cosatu. The charterists consists of other wider organisations such as SANCO today and would have also included the UDF prior to its disbanding with the coming of the new dispensation. The Freedom Charter defined a number of specific objectives for a free South Africa including ‘the people shall govern’ and calls for numerous universal rights, access to work, housing, education etc. The initial salute made at the signing of the Freedom Charter in Kliptown in 1950 actually included the raised thumb, but this was entirely phased out by the 1970s, largely influenced by the Black Power movement in the USA (Fredrickson 1996).

than the clenched fist, is not necessarily, as young people in particular make proud celebratory acknowledgements of the Azanian Peoples Liberation Army (APLA)[63] whenever they refer to the history of the PAC. For Thabiso, affiliating himself with the PAC was an act of associating with ideologies around Africanism, a consciousness of self and a sense of value of history, place and its power, that exists outside of wealth and monetary influence.

Many of the young PAC affiliates are also 'Rastafarians'[64], pointing to the importance of a self identity associated with African-ness, blackness and a sense of communal worth outside of wealth. Many of these people will also claim affiliation with Steven Bantu Biko, but when pressed for details will state they know little about him or his writing except that it's about 'Consciousness' (with a spectacularly big C). Between the PAC affiliates and the Rastafarians exists a sense of anti-politics and anti-power mongering, often referred to as Babylon or Politricks[65]. This is two sided, firstly there is the sense that Africanism and associations with an Africanist past deny what is an imposed sense of political form and the capitalist system, but is also because the PAC is seen as the victimized freedom organization of the struggle; who lost lives, were imprisoned on Robben Island, were betrayed by the negotiated settlement and are kept quashed by the ANC because their revolutionary credence would undermine the rhetoric of the ANC.

There is a sense of allegiance on a historical basis here. Africanist allegiance, of the pride of belonging is largely based on a broader Pan African continental sentiment expressed by the likes of Nkrumah and Kenyatta that was largely nostalgic (Howe, 1999). Characteristic of this mode of thought (and often criticized for it) is the romanticizing of 'tribal' pre-colonial Africa as largely non-ethnicist, peaceful, and based

63 APLA, first called Poqo was the armed wing of the PAC, infamous for sabotage and violent conflict that targeted civilians. Unlike the armed wing of the ANC, Umkhonto We Sizwe who largely refrained from the killing of people, at least within the bounds of South Africa, and therefore a claimed a sense of noble armed struggle, Poqo actively targeted white South Africans and was seen as extremist due to this (Mathabatha 2004).

64 This term has a very wide ranging meaning but generally means an affiliation with Africa, African self-hood, Haile Selassie (not usually in detailed form), peace, reggae and Marijuana. It can also extend to dreadlocks, head wraps, vegetarianism and Marcus Garvey.

65 I am not able to ascertain where the term politricks originated. It would seem to be a Jamaican term used widely in reggae music, including by Robert Nesta Marley.

on African tenets such as Ubuntu (in southern Africa), or Ujamaa (in Tanzania), attributing the fall of African society and particularly its humanity on colonialism and white domination. These young people's relationship to Africanism is thus based on a sense of pride in a historical African-ness, of 'tradition' and 'culture'. Many a time when discussion has turned to the PAC, young people make brazen claims to APLA, finding deep sentiment in its strong sense of militancy, often almost copying it (or what they believe it would have been) – taking on a physically aggressive and ideologically 'radical' stance towards politics and perhaps even society more generally. The sentiment for APLA as one of the major points around which young allegiances to the PAC are formed, points to a now passed moment of struggle history and a sense of communion with soldiers who would have been active when these young people were children. This indicates a sense of nostalgia for 'other people's memories', a connection to history and a perceived knowledge of history rather than a present reality. Likewise the sense that the 'heroes' of the PAC and APLA in particular have been betrayed makes claims for allegiances based on other people's memories, a connection to a past not lived (or lived at the age of 5 years old or so).

This is particularly stark when the conversation turns to present day PAC. Young PAC members are well aware of the infighting and power struggles within the PAC. Much frustration with the PAC is voiced by young people who are disappointed about the ways in which its members fight and so often publicly, about the ineffectiveness of their political sway in the national political arena and their lack of productivity, even on a very local scale. The strong radicalism of young PAC affiliates stands in strong contrast to the present reality of rather petty and docile squabbling. For many young people, it would seem, their connection to the militancy of a PAC past resonates more strongly with their senses of frustration and discord, something for which they are not represented in a contemporary PAC party. This is why Thabiso is not a card-carrying member of the PAC, and thus can distance himself from the politics acted out by its inner circles – or card carrying members. His is an ideological connection, a connection to, a nostalgia for its history and not its current day bureaucracy. And for this reason he doesn't feel the need to formalize his allegiance. And, while the ANC also has its public

wars between factions and ideologically conflicting members, there is a sense they are warring for bigger stakes. That the PAC in comparison is ‘fighting over dust’ as one young person put it. At least in the ANC there is something to fight for. And this is what Thabiso has been mulling over for the last while.

Thabiso was in matric in 2007 and therefore baptized in the political fire of perhaps the most violent year of the demarcation protests. Thabiso’s politics is almost certainly defined by this, making him sceptical of politics, unsure of political dogma and openly disdainful of politicians (he has recently had a public spat with the Mayor of Merafong who, it is now widely known, has decided he is ‘ignorant and insolent’). However he is definitely interested in politics, even excited by it. He is also fiery about developing his community, about the need for community leaders to be accountable and the possibilities for political action to ensure this. He has also been unemployed for four years; he chills at the Market every day. And though his store manager mom can support him, she keeps telling him he has to be a man.

“You know the PAC can’t do anything for me”, he says somewhat defensively when my only reaction to his plans is a slow eyebrow raise. “I have to be a man”, he keeps repeating throughout his hour long monologue of convincing me, and himself, that his only option is to join the SACP. Thabiso had been adamant that he would never join the ANC; he would repeat this fact often in public and more private discussion. I had once watched him become physically aggressive when a local ANC member and council staff member called him comrade, refusing the address vehemently. Today the SACP is his compromise. *Not quite* the ANC. The only thing I could think to say was “people will call you comrade”. He shrugged. We went to meet some young SACP members a week later.

As we walked into Jabu’s yard he was standing at the doorway of the kitchen, one of those double doors, so that the top half was wide open and he was just closing the bottom half. As he noticed our presence he strolled up to us. An unusually tall and confident looking man, he dressed much like other young people with a slightly torn

grey shirt with its sleeves cut off at the shoulders and a ‘sportie’ (a cloth hat with a shallow brim that forms a staple part of the attire of a ‘pantsula’, a dance and kwaito music based subculture born from urbanized young black men in townships). He also had a ‘black eye’, recent, perhaps having been inflicted a day or two before. It was very swollen and quite purple, with a cut just above his eyebrow. He had older scars on his face too and on the exposed parts of his arms. This made him look a little scary, and with his height and seeming confidence, he was rather intimidating. He gathered some chairs; I was offered the least broken one. We sat under a newly green leafed peach tree in the dusty yard. I was almost sitting under the washing line, and when the wind blew, a t-shirt touched the back of my head, but I pretended not to notice. But when we spoke, my nervousness was replaced by a slight embarrassment at my initial feelings.

Jabu was surprisingly soft spoken and our interview started off quite slowly as he was careful with his choice of words, and thoughtful about the details of his story.
He began by saying he knew the process of interviews and signing consent forms; he had done these kinds of interviews a few times before. However when my first questions were about his childhood, he seemed somewhat taken aback. He expected questions on the details of demarcation, he had been asked by journalists and other academics doing work on service delivery protests and xenophobia. We began with basic questions on his upbringing and the interview soon took on a life of its own when his brother, a friend and Thabiso launched into a two and a half hour discussion of the things laying heavy on their minds.

Jabu has lived and schooled in Khutsong all his life with a short stint in an inner-city college to complete his matric. After school, like many others, he found himself short of options.

> You see after schooling I was like any other ordinary young person who was from school. Firstly the lack of [employment], lack of funds to further my studies, I ended up getting some casual jobs around you see. Until such time that I developed an interest in politics you see, that is when I started attending organizational meetings.

Jabu joined the SACP in 2002 and was instrumental in the district organization of the national re-launch of the YCL in 2003, and was soon elected as its district chairperson. In 2005, with the announcement of the 12th Amendment bill, Jabu was drawn to the forefront of anti-demarcation sentiment, as the district SACP decided to contest the ANC's decision. He explains:

> Unfortunately here the community in Khutsong was not consulted until the government pronounced that and then that created a problem you see. That is when we started, [we] began to discuss it within the alliance structure, which is the SACP, to say; 'but now the SACP being in the alliance and being the organization that represents the poor and the working class within the alliance, how come were we not told as the alliance, by the ANC, about the matter?' Because we should have been able to hear from the people's view [whether] are they comfortable with that or not, with that decision. But now unfortunately that was not made. Only to find that the SACP began to convene alliance meetings with the ANC to say 'no look people, this cannot be acceptable. People must be called and be told about this, people must just not be [kept out of the loop]', but the ANC refused to do that. That is when the SACP began to organize now as to say; 'but now if you are not going to do that we will tell people what is going on so that it does not take the community by surprise this matter you see. The people must know'.

The SACP therefore took up the role of 'being on the people's side', led predominantly by Jomo Mogale. However as youth involvement in the demarcation protests grew, Jabu's role grew. He was soon joined in the struggle by his brother Musa, who joined the YCL when the protests were in full swing. Musa quickly rose up the ranks to become the deputy secretary. Musa joined us about an hour into the interview. He was very different from his brother. He was smaller and smiled a lot. He was dressed well, in a new looking white golf shirt with a notably fancy belt around his waist. And while his

brother was gentle spoken and quite solemn in tone, Musa was almost hyper active with a much stronger comrade accent[66]. Together they shared their dynamic and incredibly complex sense of demarcation, alliance complexity and youth senses of political identity.

The brothers both resonate strongly with community issues and a need for social justice. When asked why they are communists, Musa and Jabu respond very similarly to Thabiso in the sense that they feel a very strong connection to community, poverty alleviation, dignity and delivery. When speaking of their origins in politics, they express a sense of seeing problems around them, discussing them within the family, and that "concerns begin at home". Jabu states;

> I grew up in that situation you see when the family sits in the evening, like watching TV, watching movies, I've been used to that, I grew up under that atmosphere of saying that we will always discuss politics. Many things that I was told by my father is what I discovered during my involvement [in mainstream politics], that no damn, my father was correct on this because in each and everything he will open a political debate in the house as to say but ... even from the news maybe after watching news saying 'what what' we heard on the news. He will create a political topic out of that you see, he will make a political statement that all of us will engage on as to say it was a daily thing that is how I developed you see. Now he was very deep *yena*.
>
> You know concerns begin from home you don't necessarily go to SACP and say 'I want to join politics', concerns begin from home and you must

66 The 'comrade accent' has become the staple 'parole' of the Charterists, ripped off by local comedians and adopted, it would seem, by most people who go into politics. The comrade accent is a very particular combination of jargon, pauses and intonations that has become an unmistakable trait of particularly youth politics and the brunt of much of popular cultures political entertainment. The accent remains a strong part of the black youth political sphere despite the ridicule. The accent is effectively a very specific way of speaking English and is a deeply political statement against the pressure to speak an imposed language 'properly'. The accent is particular to a kind of defiance against the importance of being middle class or well educated and is very much a part of the upsurge in populist, 'with-the-people' politics in South Africa that affords the people who use it a kind of grassroots legitimacy.

be part of the people that influence changes within the system itself. If the conditions at your home are influenced by [a] political system then in order to change that particular concern [or] condition you must be part of the influences that inform our conditions. So probably what I would say is that my brother was a politician and spoke [of] political issues at a level of family and an individual would develop an interest. I joined politics, took membership with political structures after everybody has taken membership you see. So that is how I got involved to influence policies that inform my conditions… doctrines and teachings of whatever came after.

Musa states:

> To be a communist is a revolutionary commitment to a cause, adoption of doctrines that might guide our principles…Our vision is very clear; our vision is that we must be able to accommodate all [who] live in the country to the standard of our economy. We don't necessarily say that we need to live an equal life, an equal life is accommodation on the basis of our economy, being able to make means of living within the system. That is what communism means.

Jabu is a little more specific, he states;

> But the working class has participated physically for the development of the economy of [this] particular country. They deserve a very reasonable living wage. People must not be exploited, people must earn according to his or her ability and contribution to the wealth, that's what communism says you see. Communism does not say you must not drive a Range Rover or you mustn't drive a BMW, the latest one, or Mercedes Benz, no. It says people must earn as per their ability and their contribution you see. Being a communist is being someone who is sympathetic to the poor

> people who are being exploited on a daily basis…. You must be able to afford basic things. I mean things that keep human dignity you see. When you see a father who works who cannot afford to buy his kids clothes or send his kids to school, that deals with his dignity within his family. His children will begin to treat him with doubt, [they will say] 'but now my dad he has no use to me, he works but he cannot even afford to buy me [things] or he cannot give me a proper education. I'm disadvantaged today because of him'.

The underlying insinuation in these definitions of communism is a somewhat defensive negotiation of what it means to be politically active within the alliance today. This is the ever-complex balance between left leaning politics and the ever present sense that the country and its politicians have accumulation of wealth high up on their agenda[67]. Though young people may be led to politics due to an agenda of poverty alleviation and restoring dignity, or being a "part of the influences that inform our conditions"; much of the mainstream political options open to young people are complexly intertwined with agendas of capital accumulation and negotiations between socialist and neoliberal economic principles.

A number of writers, such as Gumede (2005), Southall (2007) and Bond (2004) [68]detail the constant contradictions of the ANC between developing economic policy and maintaining commitments to wealth redistribution in a new political environment. Bond makes the argument that the central tenets of social welfare and redistribution of much of the anti-apartheid stance, evident in the Freedom Charter for example, have failed due to a complex combination of international pressures and unwise leadership.

67 "I didn't join the struggle to be poor" has become one of the most notorious statements of the ANC"s neoliberal shift. Uttered by Smuts Ngonyama in 2007, the statement hit headlines throughout the world. See Hold Your Nose: the smell of corruption in the Economist (2008) as well as Cause struggle now a wealth struggle by Mdlalose (2008) in the Mail and Guardian Online

68 I focus here on Bonds discussion purely for simplicity's sake. Both Gumede (2005, 2009) and Southall (2007) have produced very interesting material on similar issues. Gumede in particular addresses broader global economic issues and trends that make for very worthwhile reading.

Globalisation demands and structural adjustment policies, indicative of the Bretton Woods institutions, pressured South Africa as a new democracy with a highly volatile economy at the end of official apartheid. They insisted on conservative capitalist economics, neoliberal and pro-west policies such as free trade and the protection of multi-national corporate intellectual property rights (even when it resulted in the over pricing of life saving medication). However Bond also points to an all too willing political elite that made unwise decisions about economic policy that satiated the requirements of major multinationals and western nations, but left liberation objectives unattended.

At the same time, Bond (2004) argues, the ANC tends to maintain the rhetoric of social upliftment and leftist ideals. He terms this “talk left, walk right”, a contradictory stance that is echoed in the words of Musa and Jabu. Bond attributes this largely to an internationalist position that the ANC took; led predominantly by Mbeki who sought to define South Africa as an international leader representing the continent of Africa. Alec Erwin’s role in the green room of the World Trade Organisation, Trevor Manuel’s roles in leadership of various Bretton Woods sub-institutions, and Mbeki’s recognition in terms of NEPAD became a major standpoint from which the South African governmental leadership defined the success of the country.

This internationalist angle of defining South African leadership’s economic and minority-capital-accumulation trends also extends into a largely internationalist consideration of its effects. Bond discusses at length, anti-globalisation forums and anti-privatisation movements throughout the world, giving much credit to anti-G8, anti-World Bank and anti-International Monetary Fund (IMF) sentiments on an international scale, with particular praise for the global agenda and cohesion of the protests at Seattle (1999), Cancun (2003) and in Johannesburg (2002) at the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Bond includes South African new social movements such as the Anti-Privatization Forum, the Landless Peoples Movement and the Water Crisis Committee etc, thus registering a South African presence in negotiations around privatization and neoliberal policies. However his globalist economics and new social movement leaning, means that he considers the new trends of capital in the country in terms that are quite

unfamiliar to many people who see and experience immense senses of wealth inequality, accumulation-on-skewed-grounds and untamed conspicuous consumption within local bounds. Bond does not register the very ordinary experiences that he attributes to *global apartheid*, even though he makes reference to those who fight against them. He misses therefore, some of the profound effects and functions of its social nature and this form of socialization's repercussions, the singular instances of politics and capitalism lived in the homes and streets of South Africa's townships.

For young political activists who are invested in assisting their communities and improving their conditions, the social dynamics of wealth accumulation and consumption - particularly in the political spectrum - have major impact. In a township like Khutsong with limited economic opportunity and major unemployment, the effects of neoliberal economic policies and of (non)trickle down tender processes, are like neon lights in what is otherwise a dim economic future.

The car wash is perhaps the most publicly obvious space in which one might observe the shifts of economic circumstance in the township. Here, young, skinny black men in sporties and all-stars set up relatively inexpensive businesses (in terms of start-up costs) on the corners of open spaces in the townships. They use buckets filled at a local tap or perhaps in a nearby yard – their parents' home or someone they pay a few Rands for the service. They fill the buckets with soaps often sold at a local spaza shop – industrial detergents sold in bulk in strange pinks and greens. The beginnings of a car wash are usually indicated by a sign, painted on a nearby lamp post or written on recycled board – most likely the back of what was a government street ad at some point. Rags are used to wash the cars, newspaper to dry the windows, a thick black polish to blacken the tires and if you pay a little extra you can get the car properly polished rather than just washed. Some that do well, move onto more specialized detergent products actually made for cars. They might also invest in a vacuum cleaner in order to better clean the interior of the car, and will often also invest in a roof structure; these are sometimes tin but the most fashionable ones will be gauze fabric on a steel structure like the type you might find in office parking lots in the suburbs. These

are the ones that, if by luck, good choice of location or connections with upwardly mobile friends, can turn into social hotspots. They are often, but not always, connected to an eatery of some sort that will sell alcohol and offer a shisa nyama (a buy and braai butchery cum restaurant increasingly popular amongst aspirant black businessmen throughout the country). Loud music will be played, perhaps out of a car to show off its expensive equipment, or else out of the eatery. Cars will usually be very large, and most likely so will their drivers – who after having been in the tender business for long enough develop an almost uniform and shockingly recurrent appearance: always a large stomach, this will most likely be covered by a designer label golf shirt (Lacoste or Polo most popularly) and a pair of equally designer long shorts, and a shaved head to top it off.

As this display of large cars, designer clothes and consumption of copious amounts of food and alcohol play out on the most public of corners in the township – those who cannot afford (or don't run a carwash) can only watch. And while this kind of consumption, referred to as 'nice time' or 'chillas', occurs every weekend and begins to inform the norm of middle class activity, their newly extended homes, enlarged group of friends, and very importantly, their avalanche of female attention, means that excess, abundance and bounty visibly quantify success for everyone in the community of all ages and genders. And often, at least one of the big men is a councillor or office bearer in the mayor's office, and a good couple of the others are business men who make their living off tenders administered by the same office.

For the children of the new middle class, clothing and cell phones often indicate wealth and prestige – even at primary school level. The cheeseboy – so named because he has cheese on his lunch sandwiches at school and cheese is a widely used colloquial term for money– is evident from a mile away with their bright coloured clothing. Younger middle-class kids wear brightly coloured outfits of cartoon characters – Ben10 currently leading the pack – that can be replaced when they are worn out; but other little boys

soon turn what is only a few pairs of clothing, a very dull red brown[69]. Older boys' fashions are also currently brightly coloured, particularly if they are bought from the right stores. Whether 'Bujwa' – associated with house music in which one would wear brightly coloured skinny jeans, neon suspenders and a cardigan, or some other combination that represent what is considered bourgeois; or 'Hip Hop' in which the current fashion is for oversized ankle high shoes in as bright a blue, red, or glittering gold as one can find. Though internationally hip hop is ridden with conspicuous consumption of the most debauched kind, 'Bujwa' (which is a colloquialism of the word bourgeois) is a home grown reflection of an embrace of publicly performed middle class consumption.

And though many are concerned about the introduction of water meters and the increasing price of food and taxi fare, the APF is not really active here, the landless peoples movement is not active here, the water crisis committee is not active here. But Cosatu is, the SACP is and so is the ANC. And while Bond celebrates the actions of the new left and major opposition to neoliberalism; capital and its consumption is the only public face of growth and development in Khutsong today and it is inextricably linked with the Alliance. Musa laments this inextricable link when he states;

> But now because of personal material gains within the movement there [has] been development of this tendency from these comrades who are greedy, greedy comrades within the movement who want to accumulate alone. And then they will be the one[s] now who lash the SACP, lash socialism, lash COSATU. It's because of material gains now because they see that the nature of this alliance as per agreement does not allow one to use government resources for self enrichment. When we deploy into the government we are not doing that on the basis that you must [grow] your personal material gains, but we did that to serve the nation. I mean you get paid for what you are doing, for a job, for your deployment,

69 Petros, sitting in his market, once lamented at length after I commented on his sons Ben10 t-shirt. It had been his son's birthday two days before so he had bought him a full set that included shorts, a back pack and a pencil case. His four year old son had been begging him for months already and he was concerned that he had put on the t-shirt the day he had got, and every day since, and that it probably wouldn't last more than a month.

> concentrate on that. If you are a comrade being interested in business, don't have interest. You must not have interest of being in business from the government; your interest must remain as a business person. There is nothing wrong with that being a comrade you see. But now if you get deployed you must get deployed and get out of the business issues. You cannot be a deployee of the ANC in a same time you are interested in tenders obviously you see. Now those are the dynamics that are fluctuating currently within the alliance you see.

Musa marks the SACP and COSATU as the lone voices of reason and the ANC as the capitalists. Jabu had mentioned this previously when he stated, "our struggle should continue and where the ANC turns a blind eye [COSATU and the SACP] have a responsibility to remind the ANC that there is a particular vision". It would seem that the ANC is seen as the ruling party, the party meant to rule, and that the alliance partners are there to ensure that its 'higher-power-given-right to rule' remain in check with socialist requirements. Bond (2004) indicates that this fluctuates as the ANC and its alliance partners shift in and out of verbal leftist commitments and practical consumerist actions. Musa continues;

> Today confused leaders of the ANC will say "no the ANC has never been a socialist movement". [But] neither the ANC has been the capitalist movement, it has never been. So it's the same as they say. But the ANC has always been sympathetic to socialism hence this NDR[70] we talked about was agreed upon as to say now we need to come up with the new strategy of the new National Democratic Revolution.

Whilst the extent to which internal alliance politics engage redistribution practices and individualist accumulation of wealth are lengthy and endlessly debatable, Musa

70 The National Democratic Revolution is the term for a continued objective of 'a better life for all', the exact details of which are not entirely clear and shift across the alliance. According to the ANC YL political education manual "It is the struggle to overcome the legacy of racial or national oppression of the black majority and Africans in particular from political and economic bondage through creation of a racially united nation with no gender and economic exploitation" (ANCYL, 2009).

particularly, but Jabu too, has made complex decisions about how to make sense of their ideological intents and the individualist accumulation that surrounds them. Musa made an extensive argument about the failures of the ultra left and communist Russia with what seems to be a disaffection with communist utopia. After a long winded discussion on his views of Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin, of his definition of what the dictatorship of the proletariat really means, and an emphasis on Marx's and Engels' middle class status, he states;

> But the reality of the matter is that you see, er, you'd always judge one another for our commitments and a revolution has its own compromises you see, it's not only about compromising the poor whatever but it's the revolution itself it has its own compromises… communism failed in Russia…and after realizing that this system cannot work everybody in Russia ran back to countries that are capitalist.

For Musa, the doctrines of communism do not work; Utopia and egalitarianism are not possible and effectively, neither is the end of capitalism. For Musa there seems to be a sense that the ANC is a party that is ideologically able to play the game of global political economy (in a way that the SACP and COSATU as defenders of the poor are not) and therefore it leads the way in running the country. Though there needs to remain a socialist leaning that protects the poor, capitalism is inevitable and the ANC are the only ones with the tools to handle it. In fact, for Musa, communists need to start facing up to this reality in order to make inroads in their socialist cause;

> And to be quite honest with you a revolutionary commitment is vis-à-vis individual ambitions because the system itself it tells you that you must contest economically as a person. You can only be taken seriously on what you have, you can only lead the community, the community can only listen to you, on the basis of what you have. So that on itself it has an influence, because one would need to contest economically to run with the processes of leading the masses.

Musa and Jabu are clearly negotiating the relationship between left and right in highly complex ways that reflect their environment and the day to day playing out of real life scenarios and relationships, all tinted with politics and money. Though Bond attributes this negotiation of capital and socialist imperatives to the highest echelons of political policy making and international power trends, in fact he completely neglects the fact of its much deeper and more complex nature as a social condition. Here Jabu and Musa present walking right and talking left, not as a basic binary of policy choices at governmental level but rather as consistent negotiation of grey areas and human ambiguities.

Part of this incredibly inwardly conscious battle with themselves for equilibrium in their ideological views and their material gains is brought on by the end of demarcation. Today, Jabu is on the SACP pay roll and Musa works in the mayor's office. Evident here is that apart from corruption, apart from being a business-person-cum-politician that Musa so strongly condemned, is the reality that being part of alliance politics can be the ticket to an ordinary job, to a paying salary. And that the meeting point of politics and capital is not always dirty or ideologically corrupt, but for a young person with little education or training, it can be a direct ticket to a new life. Musa is incredibly honest about this;

> You know what happened after the demarcation struggle we sat down together with the ANC to discuss who should become the executive mayor of Merafong, who was directly involved you see. And then I was told that [I] must be co-opted to be part of the system, hence I worked within the mayor's office. There's nothing wrong with that as there's no revolutionary betrayal in the whole thing. As much as you know that we [have] got fundamental responsibility, all of us, to ensure that we transform not only our lives but the lives of those that need you.

Musa and Jabu support their elderly mother at home. When relating a moment on the demarcation protests where they were beaten by police after being spotted in their own yard, Musa mentioned that the police had come in because there had been 'no gate at that time', pointing to a large and rather high maroon metal gate, that is obviously a new addition after accessing paying jobs. Jabu and Musa are almost painfully honest about what seems from the outside to be a contradiction, even using the word "co-opted", relating what is in fact completely logical reasoning for two young men who were unemployed. They laugh as they tell stories and point out scars to me, after angry community members felt betrayed and even physically attacked them. They continue;

> This thing of traitor began long [ago] as I told you. It began even long before he became [part of the mayor's office] even, just immediately after the end when we just began to engage with the ANC and then now having to campaign for the national elections of the ANC. And then we find ourselves in the situation whereby we are there sometimes campaigning with the people whom we used to call traitor … Remember there every comrade ran away [laughter] and then on behalf of the SACP no [one from the SACP] was there I had to be there, 'here is the comrade Jabu go there', addressing the community for the first time [since recurrently addressing them on demarcation issues] that joh! 'No now er comrade you see things have changed now'.... [laughter]... It was a panga. It was a fight, directly attacked; I have a scar somewhere here.

Jabu and Musa, within a number of weeks, were mandated to campaign for the ANC for the national elections. They were clearly conscious of the way their own community would view them, and concerned about not being trusted by 'their people'. This must have been particularly stark as they had recently been the heroes of their community, standing in the stadium addressing their people about 'revolutionary concerns of the struggle'. Jabu and Musa are almost defensive, arguing their ethical *obligations*, their socialist principles and their political/career objectives.

It is this contradiction that Thabiso has struggled with for the last couple of weeks. Though he wishes to retain his moral high ground, the options open to him to be 'part of the people that influence changes within the system itself' as Musa has stated it, are limited to the complex negotiations of work, wealth, politics and ideology within the alliance. It would seem that, if he were to maintain a clear conscience, he would be able to do much less within politics, and would not have the resources to support himself or his politics. If, however, he joined the SACP, he might at least maintain a social agenda and if he does well, rise in the ranks and develop a career.

The head of the PAC in the area called this 'Stomach Politics'. He was resigned; he knew that particularly the young PAC members were likely to leave the PAC for a political organization that could offer them more. He said "the ANC has stolen them". This differs from Bayart's *Politics of the Belly* in at least one stark way. Though there is certainly a politics of patronage evident in the Alliance, particularly in its upper echelons and older comrades, stomach politics is a politics of survival that occurs at the most basic level not as corruption, not as greed, culturally rationalised practice of patronage of the powerful, "the goat that feeds where it is tethered" as it where. Rather this is the ambition of career, of an interest, nurtured through learning, expansion of networks and entrance into the applicable institutions (as you might as a teacher, doctor or business man) and effectively developing a career from which one might grow, mature and function as a fully socially purposeful adult. It is not the wining and dining, the amassing of millions of the major political elites as recounted by Bayart but rather a quite basic strategy for young unemployed and ambitious people, of work, of practicality and pragmatism, and of providing a gate for your mother's old house. Connotated in the word 'stomach', rather than belly – which conjures up visions of a pot belly of the stereotypical monarchical type, even in the French translation - this politics is less a politics of conspicuous consumption or of lavish wealth that it would probably become at a later stage as they got older. But at this point, it is basic career development, the accessing of work. You could possibly even argue that it fits well within Jabu's visions of a communist achievement of dignity, of being able to afford basic things.

But the sense of self contradiction still exists. And it would seem that young politicians in Khutsong and beyond seek tools of legitimation to assert their politics. In a dispensation where so many of the issues have not yet been dealt with and we remain stagnant in poverty alleviation, land distribution and service delivery amongst many others; there is also a shift of incomprehensible speed, so fast we are unable to keep abreast with its repercussions, in the fields of capital, of social hierarchical shifts, of renegotiations of social dynamics of race, of democratic rights attributed to women and homosexuals in law and so conspicuously in the media. On a local level (though evident nationally) communities struggle with basic livelihoods, while the bigger picture seems to speak of wealth, affluence and power. The stark contradictions of local government are perhaps most indicative of this. Since its inception in 1995/1996, its percentage of national revenue has grown by approximately 15% every year (Atkinson 2005). While funds pour into local government structures, since 2005

> Many municipalities were having difficulties in providing services: of 284 municipalities, 203 could not provide sanitation to 60 per cent of their residents; 182 were unable to provide refuse removal to 60 per cent of their residents;155 could not provide water for 60 per cent of properties; 122 could not provide electricity to 60 percent of homes; 116 were unable to provide housing for 60 per cent of their residents and 42 were unable to execute 50 per cent of their functions … these statistics do not reflect the technical aspects of infrastructure, such as maintenance of services, once installed… these statistics do not reflect the human aspects of service delivery, such as dealing with bills, complaints and waiting lists (Atkinson 2005, 60).

In 2005, it was already clear that the state of local realities would result in upheaval – 5085 legal protests and 881 illegal protests in the 2004/5 financial year according to the Minister of Safety and Security, Charles Nqakula (Atkinson 2005, 58). Allen and Heese (2005) foresee then, that “a lack of delivery combined with increased municipal salaries and the perceived fat-cat lifestyle of councillors and officials will increasingly not be

tolerated, and will provide fertile ground for protests and civil unrest". By 2010 the Municipal IQ[71] indicates a major rise in instances of protests at over three times the number nationwide (von Holdt 2011). This does not include the xenophobic attacks of 2008, that saw 62 people killed, 100 000 displaced and attacks in at least 135 locations around the country (von Holdt, 2011). Illuminating in terms of the immense gap between South African's everyday difficulties and the State's lofty constitutional ideals, the xenophobic attacks where an indication of the desperation and violence on the ground that goes completely unaddressed when we talk of rainbow nations and born free generations. White liberals and cosmopolitan-types took to the streets for the first time since the 1980s in demonstration against the actions of some of 'the masses' they once so vehemently supported, horrified at the lack that democracy, equality and freedom are able to afford for an ideal society.

In an era where the young are told they are 'born frees' and individual rights and liberties are so strongly pushed by left and right (though often with different intentions), young people are faced with a national climate that confuses a ideological direction. This is most obvious in the clash between wealth accumulation and ideological standpoints. But it extends into far deeper, more subtle sections of social construction that cannot be discussed at length and that are thoroughly under researched, and most often researched from gerontocratic positions. But the xenophobic attacks begin to surface some of the questions. Young people are faced with multiple incarnations of neo-liberal self identity-ism, both local (such as YFM) and international (MTV and the like). Young people's lives are stained through with discourses around HIV/AIDS and sexual economies, two issues rife with gendered, social, race, ethnicity, class based and political complexities of differing forms dependant on the person, place and various other demographic indicators. Race and ethnicity continue to be controversial topics as young people come to terms with an 'equal society', affirmative action issues, the deepening cleavages in schooling and the complex discourses around forgiveness

71 The Municipal IQ statistically measures protests by community instance rather than police engagement with individual protest action – as the Ministry of Safety and Security does. The municipal IQ therefore has protest action at 2005 at approximately 30, to over 100 in 2010.

(perhaps most starkly brought into public discourse by Jansen in 2009[72]). Youth politics, positioned most ostensibly by the national leader of the ANCYL, Julius Malema, has somethingof an identity crises, a legitimacy crisis. And one of its (and Malema's) strongest attempts at asserting clarity seems to be situated in recalling the past.

Perhaps the most spectacular case of this is the singing of 'Dubula Ibhunu' by Julius Malema. Already intertwined with a political dialogue around the president of the country singing 'Umshini Wam', the resurgence of militant and violent songs sung in public by political leadership brought about a significant level of public furore[73]. Though these songs have political significance, something that all including Afriforum[74] will attest to; the general sentiment (and I simplify here) of those angered by the singing of such songs was that they are no-longer appropriate. The discussion around the singing of struggle songs is wide ranging and remains dubious even in the courts it is dragged into, but what is of particular interest here is that history is re-performed through song in a period of 'peace' and democracy. That some people respond so negatively, and that others sing along in brazen support – even after a court interdict – suggests that the recall of history and the understanding of change and difference in the present is a highly contentious and even emotive subject for many South Africans.

Currently most of the discussion on this issue has been reduced to questions of racism and counter racism, probably because this sensationalising gets the most attention for the media, but also because race is clearly an issue still sensitive for many in the country. However there is a silence on why the past acts as so strong a symbol for

72Jonathan Jansen became the Vice Chancellor of Free State University in the midst of a controversy in which four white male students had tricked and then video taped university ground and cleaning staff into eating food they had urinated in. Jansen took it upon himself to forgive the students who were, at the time, in the middle of a court case brought against them by numerous human rights bodies. He was lauded by some for his 'non-racial policies and attempts at racial unification' and chastised by others for imposing the act of forgiveness on those who were wronged. For interesting reflection on this see De Vos 2009.

73 The singing of protest songs that have a violent undertone such as 'kill the boer' and 'bring me my machine gun' have brought about various arguments around hate speech, heritage, racial hatred, farm killings, sexual assault and much more. For a fuller discussion on the many complexities and court cases of the singing of protest songs see Forde 2011.

74 Afriforum is a 'civil rights initiative' for 'minorities' that ensures 'a future for us in Africa' with a largely young Afrikaner base. They took Julius Malema to the South Gauteng High Court on charges of hate speech for singing Dubula Ibhunu. For more information on Afriforum and their ongoing terse relation with Malema (including a "an international campaign to ensure that Malema becomes an even greater embarrassment to the ANC in the eyes of the international community [through] a short documentary film and book entitled From Mandela to Malema" you can visit their website.afriforum.org.za

political rallying for young people in the present who, in all likelihood, do not remember or have direct personal experience of that past. There is a connection here to history that is about more than racism, and caries great weight in contemporary political discourse. A useful analytical tool to consider this renegotiation of history is that of postmemory. Nouzeilles (2005) takes the word form Marriane Hirsch (2008) who defines postmemory as "a very particular form of memory precisely because its connection to its object or source is mediated not through recollection but through an imaginative investment and creation" (Nouzeilles 2005, 265).

We need to make a distinction here, between youth postmemory as an active creative[75] form of enactment of a positively perceived history and concepts on history and subject construction such as Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1991). As is widely discussed in Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1991), historical claims can be used by subsequent generations for the purposes of nationalist construction and 'imagined' affinities, replacing the anonymity and inequality of members of a community or state so that "in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (1991, 224). While there is no doubt some sense of this kind of constructed historical relation and connection creation in youth references to "the struggle" I would argue it goes a step further. In the references, the songs, the terminology and even the appropriated mind states of historical politics, of a politics few of these young people could really remember, is a merge of time, a kind of anachronism of past and present, of the times of revolution and new dispensations. There is a sense that the break that 1994 was initially said to represent has had parts of it washed away, carried into another time, into a future time, by a wave of appropriated memory and renegotiated, re-imagined history. Young people are doing something more than imagining current population affinities, but rather engaging differences, tackling the past and attempting to consider a future.

Nouzeilles uses the term to describe the practice of Argentinean film maker, Albertina Carri. Carri uses postmemory to investigate and make sense of the deaths of her

75 I use the terms active and creative rather than agentive. I steer away from 'agency' because it insinuates some sense of a self-reflexivity or self assurance of objective that can be misleading. A creative act affords an exploratory nature that does not hold the weight of intent and ideology of agency.

activist parents under Pinochet. Through various techniques, Carri recollects, renegotiates, imagines and investigates the lives of her parents and the trauma of their deaths. Nouzeilles sees these film making techniques as creative and imaginative largely because they fabricate much of what is missing in order to attempt some sense, some clarity in what are lost memories and misunderstandings. Like Carri, Musa and Jabu enact a creative connecting of the dots to attempt some semblance of a political past that makes sense, and an associated political continuum that orders a contemporary political arena.

Throughout our discussion, Jabu and Musa make references to historical figures, historical relationships and "remembering" periods in history at which they were not present, such as the 1976 student uprising and the Sharpeville massacre of 1960. This kind of 'remembering' recalls into the present a kind of political action and a series of political leadership that is today praised as heroic. By making references to the historical, Jabu and Musa make references to a time when, perhaps, revolutionary objectives were clearer.

> So yerr man the Alliance is still far from achieving that because now we are still in the revolution hence we are saying that you will see that the ANC says that though it is a political organization because it now contests elections, it is still a liberation movement because it has not yet achieved everything that [they] are supposed to achieve as a liberation movement. And in order for it to achieve that it needs these two parties the SACP and the COSATU, as per the agreements that take us way back you see, like the Morogoro Conference in 1969. The Morogoro Conference where, unfortunately most of those leaders are no longer with us.

By making reference to the Morogoro Conference[76] and leaders that are 'unfortunately no longer with us' Musa makes a claim for a period of political action, political affiliation

76 the conference of 1969 was held in Tanzania with delegates from numerous left wing organizations to set forth an objective for the ANC. The conference was held at a particularly difficult time for the left, having been banned for almost a decade and having much of their major leadership in

and political leadership that outweighs contemporary examples, critiquing the calibre of contemporary leadership. Here Musa insinuates that COSATU and the SACP are historically connected to the ANC (Cosatu was only formed in 1985 long after the 1969 conference and the alliance was only formalised in 1990 (Barchiesi 2011, 65)). He infers that they therefore 'go way back', a kind of connection that affords a sense of loyalty. This history that they share assumes an 'unsaid' binding that makes them interdependent. In a period where these relations are increasingly tense, a claim towards a legitimating historisization (even if these relationships have always been difficult[77]) affords the alliance and its members some sense of stability.

What we see here is a re-imagining of a clearer and more direct history. Musa makes inferences to a brotherhood and loyalty that did not necessarily exist or that does not follow chronological reason. This is not a confusion of historical fact, but rather a necessary dismissal of it. As an enactor of postmemory, Musa is afforded the creative licence to negotiate the needs that history might fulfil. For Nouzeilles, postmemory is malleable memory. Because it is not recalled directly, it automatically recognises the grey areas of remembering, the lapses in fact. Like Carri, Jabu and Musa renegotiate historical fact in order to renegotiate national narratives, to redefine what the coming of 'freedom' might mean. Postmemory is a creative survival practice that provides these political actors with the tools to negotiate ideological subversion and political betrayal. This is not creativity of the aesthetic kind, but rather of the kind of crucial complicity or psychological survival.

This complicity is multi dimensional. There is a complicity with the realities of capital accumulation and career based stomach politics. There is a complicity too, with a more legitimate affiliation to 'untainted' political figures. Speaking of 'old school' leadership of the alliance, and more specifically claiming to share ideological views with such leaders is a common practice throughout the alliance, and the youth are not to be left out.

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prison since the Rivonia trial a few years earlier. The conference was a watershed moment in reinvigorating and redefining their struggle. See Nieftagodien and Ndebele, 2004.

77 the relationship between the Communist Party of South Africa (the SACP's predecessor) and the ANC has been a terse one since its inception. For more see Johns 1995.

Malema often makes claims to historical leaders (Forde 2011) and Musa and Jabu are no different. The leaders most often referred to are usually long deceased (and perhaps therefore unable to negate any associations made), though Mandela is still used as a token of legitimation both in word and in presence, particularly as he becomes more reclusive with age. Mandela's presence at an ANC rally after Mbeki's ousting and just before the elections of 2009 that brought Zuma into the president's office, was marked as a legitimising of Zuma's candidacy, widely commented on in the media[78].

The ousting of Mbeki was perhaps a catalyst of this type of rhetoric as opposing sides scrambled to assert their legitimacy over the master-narrative of the ANC. Today, the names that are spoken of differ somewhat to those that were called upon during Mbeki's terms in office. Today a sense of a break from Mbeki and his beliefs is voiced through the mentioning of specific names, these are most often the names of 'radicals', 'vanguards' and 'men of the people', characteristics more commonly associated with Zuma. The fact that many are already dead affords them a separation from more contemporary factional politics of the ANC, clearing them of any dirt of the Mbeki era. Jabu mentions "Moses Mabhida, leaders like Moses Kotane, leaders like Harry Gwala, leaders like J.B. Marks[79]". Jabu's inferences are atypical. Whilst most, such as Malema, reference well known names such as Tambo and Luthuli, Jabu speaks of particularly communist leadership, less glamorous than many of the people who today adorn the names of major airports and freeways[80]. This is a particular political strategy that references grassroots leadership, unsung and therefore untainted by political infighting or the glamour associated with major metropolitan centres and brand new infrastructure. Hani is a similar case, growing in prominence but still largely considered a real hero, underappreciated and deceased too young. Musa is mesmerized by Chris Hani. He begins by lauding his revolutionary credentials – in his strong sense of justice for the poor and in his militant capabilities - by lamenting his death at so pivotal a stage, by imagining the difference he would have made to the negotiated settlement had he not

78 for more see McGreal 2009.

80 There has recently been a World Cup stadium developed and named after Moses Mabida, this is relatively recent and his story is still little known to most young people.

been killed and by discussing various theories on why he was killed. He would never have let the CODESA[81] negotiations be so one sided, sanctioning major white wealth and reneging on much of the redistributive intents of the SACP at the time, Hani was principled. For Musa, Hani was the ultimate leader. He even has two pictures of him on his bedroom wall, one of which he was generous enough to give to me. He indicated I should look after it very carefully, that I should think of Hani whenever "I didn't know where I was going".

Musa makes a very clear point of some disillusionment with the current political climate, one he reasons through the loss of leaders such as Hani. This is probably particularly strong amongst young people in Khutsong who have had firsthand experience of the non-revolutionary stance of the dominant party through the demarcation issue. But it goes beyond this as 'co-opted' members of the Alliance attempt to make sense of a present politics and a past that they imagine as more thoroughly motivated, of a genuine political agenda and better led. This nostalgia for a political history, imagined as better than the present, is used to afford political direction in the present. By appropriating political identities, ideologies and their practical enactments, or at least what they were deemed to have been, young people afford themselves an agenda they see as legitimate.

It would seem that young people's appropriation of the past and its forms of political enactment and thinking, afford a reworking of considerations of place, politics and the future. Jabu and Musa are embedded in a sense of postmemory, developing a connection to historical ideas, heroic figures and forms of language, 'not through recollection but through an imaginative investment and creation'. Like Carri, their renegotiation of history and associatively the contemporary, redefines how we understand the national narratives of freedom and liberation, of how youth are expected to access new spaces of possibility and equality. This renegotiation of memory brings into stark contrast the realities of lives lived in ordinary spaces of poverty and

[81]Conference for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) – the platform for a negotiated exit from state institutionalised apartheid that brought the apartheid state to the table with the ANC.

deprivation, and the deep disjuncture this reality has with the promises of what the end of apartheid should have meant.

For young people to negotiate this kind of relationship with history, indicates a fissure between generational pass on of memory and meaning. Young people, in the face of contradictory policy choices and incongruous political objectives, as well as the day to day paradoxes of wealth and nothingness, take ownership of memory and mould it accordingly, producing tools and strategies for negotiating what is an incredibly difficult political and ethical spectrum. For Carri, even fictions indicate some sense of perceived realities and ideals or expectations. Memory is a malleable tool and even memories that are wrong, tainted by trauma or social differentiation and interpretation, add to our understanding of an event, a people, the environment of a memory or even what it means to remember.

For Jabu and Musa memory becomes a continuous negotiation of self and country, of personal memory and public history. Most specifically it seems to be situated in an act of political identity legitimation. This is enacted through language, practice, protest and ideology. It is part quotation, part embodiment and very much a complete reinvention. To maintain some sense of ethical and ideological clarity is to connect ones stomach politics, perhaps, to heart politics – where political careers meet the social objectives that first struck Jabu and Musa, "the influences that inform our conditions".

After all it is both that afford some sense of genuine social productivity, afford young people the possibilities of buying their mothers a gate for the house, and maintaining an individualised personal legitimacy. Returning to that conversation with Thabiso in his mother's kitchen, it is in being able to afford to buy ones mother a gate, in producing an individualised and independent identity that will assist Thabiso to be "a man". Thabiso cannot claim to be a man as long as he relies on his mother's income[82]. Thabiso cannot claim to be a man as long as he is unable to fend for himself, unable to head a family, get married, afford lobola. It is in being a man that Thabiso attains a social place that

[82] See Mosoetsa (2011) for a discussion on masculinities and poverty.

defines him as belonging and a part of the whole. Not waiting. Until such a time he is unable to make significant shifts in his environment, does not hold the sway that would accompany a position in the hierarchy of socio-political relations. Without a job he cannot have influence, without the Alliance he is unlikely to ever hold a steady job. Thabiso, therefore, has chosen stomach politics, and is going to become a comrade.

5. looking for something different

I received a call late in the evening on Thursday 2nd December 2010. It was Thabiso. They had been arrested. He was going to call me back.
I lay awake waiting for the call, wondering what the 'anthropologists' handbook' would advise, not to mention the university ethics committee. I was worried. I had no legal experience, I wasn't particularly connected and I had no idea where they were. I waited for the call back but it didn't come.

The next morning after numerous calls to as many people's cell phone numbers as I had, to no avail, Thabiso finally called back. They had received their cell-phones and wallets back and were being transported to the Midrand Magistrate's Court, north of Johannesburg. He suggested I come see them if I could.
A few hours later, arriving at the Magistrate's Court I wondered what I would do next. How would I find them? Can one just slip into a court proceeding and sit in the back? What if they needed bail money? How many of them were there? As I walked up the ramp toward the entrance I caught a glance of Palesa in the window and as I turned into the door way. There they all were. Almost all the regulars were there, minus Juka, Pitso and the Bafanas.

Palesa was the first to see me and she gasped wrapping her arms around me, relieved to see a familiar, supportive face. Not that she expected me to do anything; they had a lawyer. The lawyer stood nearby speaking with Pupa and an unfamiliar face, one of the employees from an environmental activist organization that had organized a protest at the Midrand Conference Centre the day before. They had hired the lawyer.

The group had been arrested and charged for illegal gathering and public indecency, after having picketed, singing songs outside the conference centre, which hosted a meeting of the Department of Energy's (DoE) IRP2 Public Hearing which would determine the terms of their future coal and nuclear power programs. The environmental activist organization had in fact applied and received permission for the picket, and the public indecency charge was either a

rather strange fabrication or somewhat of a misnomer. At the point at which this was stated, the charge had been changed to trespassing, and then later dropped. They were therefore just filling in all the paper work for their release by the time I got there.

Palesa's response at my arrival was somewhat surprising. Palesa had always been extraordinarily confident and somewhat radical in her views. She had a kind of no nonsense approach to most things and while friendly and smiley, she kept everyone but her sister at a distance. I remembered her responding in Setswana to all questions set to her by the only-english-speaking convenor of a communism workshop in Johannesburg once, not because she couldn't, not aggressively, but to make a point. Her level of relief and outward expression of happiness at my presence was therefore somewhat uncharacteristic and made her seem tender, almost childlike, and clearly she had been a little afraid. Strangely enough, in the corner with his bag on his lap, sat Thabiso, alone. This was strange because Thabiso had always been the unofficial leader of the group, by far the most outspoken, the most radical. Pupa by comparison, though always quite prominent, had taken a back seat generally and was now clearly taking responsibility, speaking with the lawyer, rushing back and forth. At first I wondered if Thabiso hadn't been a little hot headed with the police and then given good reason to sit in a corner quiet. However when Pupa did finally come to say 'hi' he was limping, and Karabo explained that the police had beaten him quite badly "because they thought he was the leader".

These uncharacteristic behaviors of the two members of the group was interesting. Particularly because both Palesa and Thabiso had been the most intense of the group. They were also the youngest. And would have come to political consciousness in the worst of the demarcation years, the height of the violence and radicalism and when the façade that covered the internal politics of demarcation was beginning to crumble. I couldn't help sensing that they had something similar to what I had picked up in Musa. Jabu, having become political

in a different kind of climate seemed far more comfortable with his politics, had a wider scope of his political objectives and seemed just generally calmer. Musa in comparison had spoken of spies and secrets, of plots and 'forces'. He had shown me a publication which he said I shouldn't tell anyone I had ever seen, because it would get both he and I into "terrible trouble". But the publication had the name and address of the publisher on the front cover, and while quite critical about the SACP and the ANC, there isn't really a shortage of that kind material in the country, you could probably just read it in a daily newspaper. I came to wonder if demarcation hadn't tainted their position toward politics, as if there were always going to be secrets, great stakes and difficult times. Politics, it seemed could never existin the state of the placid and 'normal'.

I was never sure if it was real or paranoia because a lot of people from varying backgrounds and even those not vaguely interested seemed to be constantly watching their backs. The illuminati[83] had come up in countless discussions with various peoples from different interests, political and non, always in the assertive. They existed, and they had their hands in something everywhere, "even Khutsong". Thabiso had at one point been convinced the police were following him around the township, and while I began to worry about his sanity, it seemed many people who I certainly would have deemed sane, believed him. While sitting outside the court waiting for the release papers, everyone digging into their lunch packs afforded them by the environmentalist group, Pupa used my phone to call his mom and explain what had happened. After a long conversation, he returned to report to us that the police had been at his home the night before, demanding to search his room – a wood and metal outhouse in the back yard. Everyone was convinced it was related and they had filled in all their details including their addresses on the police forms when they were first arrested. For all their expectant paranoia (Pupa was obsessed with the illuminati) they seemed genuinely shocked. The shock soon wore off as they described to me the

83 As it had been explained to me, the illuminati and the freemasons were perceived to be secret sects who controlled the world, with particular influence in capital and the media. Some also believed that the illuminati were said to be Satanist.

expressions on the faces of the cops when the addresses they put down were in Khutsong. “The cops were scared I tell you. ‘Khutsong ha! What are you doing so far from home, spreading trouble?’, they were scared” said Karabo laughing, clearly quite proud with being associated with a place and people as notorious as Khutsong.

You might be wondering how we got to this picture in the first place. Well frankly so was I. Because my initial association with this group of people was actually as a reading group. We met every Friday. And quite peacefully to begin with. Every Friday we would meet in the corrugated iron dwelling in the back yard of Thabiso’s grandmothers home in Skopas. We were supposed to begin at twelve, but usually by twelve thirty there were still only a few people milling about at the Market, and others still on their way, or not coming, who knows?
Those of us who did meet, and there were a few regulars, would amble into the shack which was always cool, damp and dark in the summer; a welcome relief from the heat. The door was chained to a hole in the corrugated iron wall, in order to keep it open. The ground below the door had had to be removed in order for the door to swing easily, resulting in a sunken recess at the entrance of the room. Inside, the floor was a thin layer of concrete and the walls and roof were corrugated iron. The ceiling exposed its beams of recycled wood and had bits of newspaper about the size of my thumb, rolled and stuffed into crevices and little holes, sealed with a white substance that was hard but still took the form of the oozing motion from which it emerged from its container. Into the dark enclave, light streamed from the doorway and was only slightly emitted in a faint haze from a bulb hanging from the centre of the room, the cabling for which, was wound around the beams of the ceiling and slipped through a small drilled hole in the corrugated iron wall, then strung loosely across the sky and into the main house.

The room was full, even when we weren’t in it, used partly as storage space but also for cooking. Sometimes the old coal or wood fired ‘dover’ stove would be lit

and pots with food or boiling water would be placed on top – around which anyone who could get close enough would huddle in the winter as the metal walls conducted the cold. The stove stood at one corner of the room, next to it a set of 'wall unit' cupboards. They had a bottom section of draws for cutlery, and hinged cupboards below the draws. It also had a top section of slightly smaller cupboards that would ordinarily hold glasses and the like. In-between the two was the "wall" part of the unit that connected the top to the bottom. Curiously, it had the pattern of white tiles, assumably to fit in with the 'kitchen décor', to seem a part of the wall – which stood oddly against a corrugated iron wall, a failed attempt at camouflage. There were two paraffin heaters stacked upon boxes in the one corner, a lampshade in another, three shallow buckets – two plastic and one large metal one – hanging on metal nails driven through the metal walls near the stove. In the centre stood a table and a number of chairs around it, against one of the walls stood a bench, extra seating for our weekly meetings.

People usually sat in pretty much the same place each time, and round would come Thabiso's little black book in which each one of us would jot down evidence of our presence, a register of who was there, and by omission, who was not. In his book lay pages of this record, inconsequential, because nobody ever paged back to check. It was useful to me though; I always tried to get it last, so that I could glance over the names in topographic order, and jot them in my own notebook if they were not familiar[84]. Many people came and went, for one meeting or perhaps two. Some stayed a little longer. The regular group, which shifted from week to week according to whether people where doing "other things", was Palesa, Karabo, Dikeledi and myself as the only females and then Bongani [85], both Bafanas, Thabiso, Rasta, Pitso, Pupa, Juka and Mzwakhe. After each signing the register, an agenda would be drawn up by Thabiso who led every meeting – a general line up of a few announcements, some kind of discussion on an issue, and then the reading.

84 It was particularly useful because people tended to use the 'names their mothers use' as well as their surnames, rather than the nicknames I had come to know them by. I use a mixture of nicknames and 'real' names in this text.

85 Not the same Bongani as that referred to in the first chapter.

Because we were first and foremost a reading group. We had gathered to collectively read and discuss various texts and ideas. This was done usually with only two or three copies amongst a group of about six or seven. For this nobody ever came prepared. Rather, we would all read sections, a page or a few paragraphs, and then pass the copy onto the next person, who would continue. Some people refused to read. Often the same people would read a few times. After a few pages we would stop, and discuss what had been read. It wasn't ideal because those who struggled a bit to read and stammered or hesitated, made following an argument too difficult. Some read too fast.

The reading group had been started by a local community activist, Pearl Khanyile. They had begun as a study group, an attempt at some continuation and support in the midst of the chaos and school boycotts of the anti-demarcation protests. They had begun with their school subjects, a kind of peer teaching group supervised by an older, more advanced figure. However, with the influence of Pearl's activist stance, she became quite influential in the MDF, as well as their own interests in the politics of demarcation, they soon began reading wider literature. With the instigation of Pearl, and then the continuation of some of the core members of the group, they had developed networks of 'progressive' people and activists, many of whom provided them with material for the reading group. We read quite widely on environmental issues and on xenophobia. Much of the material collected from other organizations dealt with the issues current to local new social movements such as water access and anti-globalization.

But the momentum of the reading group soon slowed, particularly when the last copy of the communist manifesto we were reading was lost. But even before the irresponsible misplacing of scarce resources, most of the meetings were slanting significantly to the agenda/announcement/discussion side more than the reading. Because there was a plan to metamorphosise into a Community Based Organization referred to always by its acronym CBO.

The plan for the CBO was a plan to develop out of the ideas of the reading group, practical applications that could make a difference to the community. It was also, very importantly, an attempt at formalization – something that could be taken more seriously than a reading group. Steps to developing the CBO were however complex and resulted in a number of internal conflicts and misunderstandings. First on the agenda was registration, which was their first step to formalization and legitimacy, only after which would they be able to benefit the community.

To begin with, the members of the study group set about clarifying the varying positions expected of a CBO: the chairperson, the deputy chairperson, the secretary, the treasurer and the spokesperson. While it may seem somewhat odd that and grouping of people would assign their individual titles before they have defined their objectives and intentions, these positions are a prerequisite for registration with the Department of Social Development and it would seem one would struggle to register ones organization should there be a penchant for a more egalitarian structure. But this selection of titles was also representative of a group of young people who are more familiar with titles than responsibilities, as these are what they are exposed to on a daily basis. Through political organizations particularly, the titles of secretaries, secretary generals, chairpersons and deputy chairpersons are widely known and people will often introduce themselves with their titles. The inner working and responsibilities of their positions are not usually part of ordinary discussion – and not part of ordinary people's experiences. No one in the CBO group, not even the treasurer, had ever used or produced a budget.

Suffice to say, selection of leadership proved difficult. It caused a number of rifts and quite a lot of mistrust. At the core of concerns were the possible political allegiances that those who stood for leadership positions might hold. Many had initially affiliated with the PAC, most of whom had since loosened their ties quite

significantly. One member was publicly outed (by a trouble seeking visitor of ANCYL origin) as having registered as an ANCYL member which drew negative reaction from certain members of the group. The members explained that it had been some years previously and that he had never received a call to attend a meeting and thus his membership was effectively void. This quelled the reaction somewhat but mistrust remained. Others too were suspected of having covert connections with political parties. While in principle the CBO was structured as a non-partisan grouping open to people of any affiliation (an interesting conversation, instigated by Palesa and Karabo, was had regarding a wide homophobic feeling amongst the men of the CBO – and clarity on the principled acceptance of someone homosexual within the CBO should they pay interest), the fear was that party connections would taint the practices of the CBO and worse still, there might be spies and information might be leaked to these political parties. Their key mistrust of party influences is likely a response due to experience with the MDF, identified by the CBO as party political interests and influences that spoiled the noble objectives initially founded in the MDFs multiparty, multi-view, civic organization.

A similar sense of ambiguity and unease surrounded establishing the constitution. On the Department of Social Development website, together with the registration papers, was a template for a constitution which I handed over to the group as a way to begin thinking around the constitution. This document was discussed one week, their intentions were discussed the next week and those intentions were counter discussed with an almost completely different group of people a week later. By the fourth meeting discussing possible ideas for the constitution (and disregarding any attempt at the reading group), finally a discussion was concretised on the objectives of the CBO. The clarity the group was able to achieve:

> The organisation shall:

- Serve the community righteously, ethically to the best of its ability.
- Exist in its own right, separately from its members.
- Continue to exist even when its membership changes and there are different office bearers.
- Be able to own property and other possessions.
- Be able to sue and be sued in its own name.
- Be independent in decision making, affiliation and political ideology through the study group

Objectives

The central tenet of this organisation is to contribute to the community of Khutsong through development of the environment.

To do so the organisation will focus on the following:

- Safety and Security Development
- Educational Development
- Health Development (including HIV/AIDS)
- Heritage Development
- Sports and Recreation Development
- Agricultural Development
- Job creation

Through programmes focused on the above social matters, the organisation will engage the community in environmental issues. By doing so, the organization seeks to address social issues through environmental development.

Definitions:
Safety and Security Development is defined by:

- A crime free Khutsong

- Achieved through awareness campaigns and support for crime free activities.

Educational Development is define by:

- Supporting school children and schools in the society
  - Achieved through resource drives, consultative support and supplementary education.

Health Development is defined by:

- Improving the health of the community
  - Achieved through educational programmes, facilitating other health organisations presence in the community and running programmes on environmental /natural supplements for improving health.

Heritage Development through Arts and Culture is defined by :

- Promoting African values and beliefs and reviving an African way of life in the community.
  - Achieved through educational programmes and arts festivals.

Sports and Recreation Development is defined by :

- Introducing different sports codes to encourage a participatory community and upliftment.
  - Achieved through facilitating sports programmes, teams and donations of sports equipment.

Agricultural Development is defined by:

- Improving the food security and self-sustainability of the community.
  - Achieved through educational programmes, assistance in providing equipment and farming materials and encouraging preservation of indigenous crops and farming techniques.

Job Creation is defined by:

- Increasing sustainable employment for the community.

- Achieved through sustainable establishment of the above mentioned programmes

(constitution 2011).

The only clarity we were able to develop was that the CBO wanted to do everything, and then to categorize everything into subsections. This began with a clear statement of objectivity and independence with a specific clause that party political needs should be kept separate from the objectives of the CBO. Then with environment as its core issue, it went on to list the great many sub-issues through which the environment might be addressed. Either way the general consensus was that nothing could be done until they had registered the CBO.

There was also a fear that if they didn't register the CBO, things might be stolen from them, that the spies would somehow have more leeway. Who would steal from them, and what could possibly be stolen from an organization that had as yet done very little and had very little, was not easy to ascertain. There may have been a Taussig type secrecy game at play here. While not on the sweepingly societal level (Kaur 2001) there seemed to be a consensus investment in secrecy and taboo that affords a kind of solidarity and power not in what is actually being kept secret, but in the secret in and of itself. As Taussig states, "there is no such thing as a secret. It is an invention that comes out of the public secret" (1999, 7). However when considering the young people of the CBO the possibility of trauma needs to be taken into account. Rather than simply assuming a Taussig type of power game associated with secret societies and the like, issues of fear, of complex relational connections and of an atmosphere of violence during demarcation are likely to have influenced the fixation with secrecy evident in the CBO. As mentioned above regarding Musa, there is something undoubtedly connected to the coming of political age in the midst of the very real threat of physical danger and major stakes that necessitates this kind of political performance.

The constitution was also indicative of how much was missing in Khutsong. From crime, health and education, to issues of meaningful recreation and employment, the CBO was not at a loss for issues that needed addressing. But was perhaps also overwhelmed by the sheer magnitude of what needed to be done. There was a sense that this was partly why particular projects were being stalled on account of registration. Though the name of the CBO translates to “we have belief”, I got the sense that considering their inexperience, lack of skill and shortage of knowledgeable local community elders for support, they were drowning a little.

Some support was afforded by the environmental group mentioned previously, Earth Life Africa, a national grouping that is substantially financed with international networks. The group invests in satellite activist groups on a grassroots level in order to educate communities about environmental issues. The CBO has been associated with Earth Life Africa for some time now – hence the beginning tenet of their constitution being focused on environmentalism. Their relationship has developed at the tail end of the rapid expansion of the NGO and CBO sector that began in 1994 after regulatory shifts that encouraged and made relatively easy the construction and rights to access funding for non-profit organizations (Habib and Taylor 1999). The NGO/CBO sector has grown immensely since, the John Hopkins report suggesting at least 100 000 non-governmental organizations, 53% of which are smaller scale CBOs (Greenstein 2003), providing almost 650 000 full time jobs, marking the NGO sector ‘employer’ of more people than the public sector or mining (of course the formalization of employment is incomparable as many in the NGO sector are precariously employed). Within this framework, numerous organisations have taken to connections, particularly with smaller scale CBOs which act on a far simpler scale in terms of organisational constitution, reach and funding possibilities, but more on this later.

The CBO and Earth Life's relationship has resulted in a couple of workshops on environment – particularly on acid mine drainage and other toxic mine environmental issues which are particularly close to the community of Khutsong who are affected by the neighbouring mines – as well the planting of three trees, all planted right near the Market. Many of the members of the CBO also attend environmental workshops in Johannesburg every week. All this is done on a volunteer basis, volunteer activists are provided with lunch and transport money.

The CBO's relations with Earth Life Africa have increasingly been of the sort at Midrand Convention Centre. The CBO would be called to attend protests, usually constituting the bulk of the protest body. Once again they are given lunch and a transport stipend. They have protested outside the Sasol offices, against the Shell plans for mining in the Karoo and most recently at COP17, where they were transported from Khutsong to Durban on a Sunday, to attend the march on the Monday, and return to Gauteng by Tuesday.

The CBO also has various other affiliations with a wide range of activist groups through their association with Khanya College. Khanya was developed as a workers resource centre in the 1980s from which various educational programmes were afforded to people who would have otherwise had little access to them – also functioning as bridging courses to tertiary education. Today, Khanya functions as a resource centre and project centre, producing broad based projects with their various affiliates that span from forms of research, to community archiving, and political education. The CBO has been involved in numerous workshops with Khanya, all held in Johannesburg (unlike Earth Life Africa who often make their way to Khutsong). Khanya works on a similar volunteer basis to Earth Life Africa, providing food and travel stipends. From their connections with Khanya, the CBO have broadened their networks, establishing

relations with a wide range of far leftist activist organizations[86] largely associated with the new social movements framework.

These numerous workshops, conferences, education programmes and protests have resulted in some of the members of the CBO travelling as far as Cape Town to attend them. Even though the CBO has done very little on-the-ground mobilization, and very few projects that align with their objectives or even ensure people in Khutsong are aware of them and their plans, they have been taken under the wing of broad new social movement organizations with access to major international funding, much of which is based on a claimed affiliation with a broad network of grassroots organizations. For a group of young people with ideas but very little experience, the connections with reputable and well resourced institutions, particularly ones that provide a day away from the banality of a street corner of Khutsong and the added benefit of a cooked lunch, affords the CBO access to some resources and knowledge, some attraction and by-association ideological legitimacy, maintaining at least a basic level of interest from a few local youth who attend meetings on a regular basis.

This is most clearly obvious in the constitution which pays brief mention to their core objective by association, the environment, then goes on to detail reams of core issues that are clearly the tangible concerns of their communities that they feel more confident to detail, despite their weekly workshops on environmental issues that would assumptively have them quite confident in the concerns and the lingo of local environmental issues.

There isn't all that much accessible literature on the roles of broader left new social movements and their affiliations with smaller grassroots organisations.

86 These include Jubilee South, and its various branches around the country, various NGOs including ILRIG, Khulumani Support Group and the Black Sash, various new social movement organisations such as the Bolsheviks Study Circles (which provided the reading group with the communist disappearing communist manifestos) the Landless Peoples Movement, organisations affiliated with the Anti Privatisation Forum, various trade unions from throughout the SADC region, Wits anarchist group, and many, many community forums/concerned residents/crisis committee organisations from many a town or township throughout the country.

There is however some material on the difficulties that the left have been faced with; the bases of grass roots organizations and issue based new social movements that are often highly localized, as well as the role of the broader left, and left intellectuals in particular, that are worth discussing for some sense of the broader discourse on the sorts of issues the CBO face.

The new social movement discourse has been prominent in certain left-left (as Bond refers to it, as opposed to the centre left of the SACP and Cosatu) circles since at least the early 2000s, but has its origins in the shifts of civic movements after 1994, and particularly with the implementation of privatization of basic services after GEAR in 1996 (Bond 2004). Many of these organizations take similar forms of those of the street committees and civics of the late 80s and early 90s, addressing locally based specified issues such as access to basic water and electricity, rates payments and delivery, HIV/AIDS, land acquisition – particularly for informal settlement dwellers. Some of these have grown into broad based institutions with links across geographical and specified localities – most specifically the Anti-Privatization Forum which was able to create a kind of umbrella network of various concerns in various parts of the country.

However the majority remains highly localized – on the basis of street committees and community concerned groups - with loose links that widen their scope and relevance. It is the focus on the minutiae of individualized instances that McKinley sees as the ultimate problem for the contemporary left of today – devoiding the left and new social movements in particular, of a wider sense of ideological standpoints and through this, more substantial connections and substantial forces to be reckoned with (McKinley 2009). As McKinley states,

> even if differentially experienced, the combined characters and actions of both the traditional and new left in South Africa have produced the effective institutionalisation of a left anti-politics, grounded in an essentially reactive, issue based and personality

> driven strategic framework as the best means to confront capital, 'engage' the state, mobilize 'the masses' and transform societal relations under capitalism. While this kind of politics can and does provide an ongoing vehicle for left activism, it can only go so far. It is essentially a defensive politics and while degrees of such have been necessary, there is no ideological, political or organizational basis from which to move onto the offensive" (McKinley 2009, 81)

Other dangers mentioned include the 'uncomfortable collaborative' role of academics and middle class leftists intellectuals in community based new social movements that have complex, often unaddressed, power dynamics (Walsh 2008). These result in problematic accounts of the poor in singular references of meaning, what Walsh refers to as the "virtue of the oppressed", while denying the clear political and academic agendas they might have of their own, what Desai (2006) refers to as "infectious political diseases of middle class activists and academics" or otherwise, denying the ways in which their presences affect the ways in which people conduct their actions and motivate their reasoning.

Both of these are good indications of some of the difficulties facing the CBO. There is a dearth of ideological connections between itself and larger, more influential organizations, resulting in a scramble for tangible similarities. Further, there is a complex power dynamic at play that is problematic, the resourced larger institutions and smaller organizations are at pains to maintain these relations for the positives they result in. However they are also well aware of the somewhat patronizing role they play, their own institutional agendas, and are perhaps less aware of a non-problematised self-accounting of the role they play and how their resources influence their power.

The CBO has chosen to attempt existence outside of the party political realm. The CBO seeks to address the issues of their local community from a civil society standpoint rather than that of more mainstream politics. The choice to

engage in the networks of new social movements is in direct reaction against the role of political parties in political formats. The CBO have clearly developed a deep mistrust of established political formations and are choosing to go it alone, and develop their own forms of community mobilization and conscientization.

At the same time however, they remain fully committed to the establishment and formalization of their own CBO, to achieve some kind of stability and legitimacy that might legitimate them, afford them an identity. This seems to be in some part a comparative act, and in another way a seperative act. I do not doubt that their preoccupation with institutionalized and hierarchical forms of social mobilization is partly due to a lack of exposure to working alternatives. Their experiences, and the possibilities offered to them by those, particularly state bodies, who provide information and afford registration, dictate their options. However they clearly have a natural penchant toward disassociating themselves with the establishment. They exist in a not quite in, not quite out, not quite a part, not quite apart space from which they attempt to make sense of their role and structure.

This extends to their position toward new social movements. Thabiso in particular is critical of Khanya College who he feels ‘uses’ smaller-scale grassroots organizations to determine their legitimacy and claim supposed reach into wider communities, and access funding on this basis. He is sceptical of the stipend structure which he sees as bribery, and which many of those in the CBO have a complex relation with. They take the train (which is time consuming and more odious) rather than the taxi for which they are given fare, because its far cheaper and they can then use the left over cash for their own personal purposes – this they have said to me, is a kind of rebellion, an act of appropriation against what they see as a almost like a bribe. They return, time and again regardless. And often they return with reading material and some new ideas. They have free access to the internet and of course wide admission to broad networks of other

likeminded institutions, and many connections that have resulted in a number of activities and quite a bit of travel.

The CBO seem to be trapped in a quagmire of affiliations that are not entirely mutually constitutive or relevant. They are petrified into an inactive form through the scramble for legitimacy and institutionalization. While at their core is the intention to be an active peer group that takes agentive steps as a group, for bettering their community, part of this is the definite need for independent, self determined constitution and of accumulating whatever (network)resources they are able to access. These affiliations are two pronged – on one side they are scrambling for relations with 'like minded' institutions that mark them as part of a particular community, connected and therefore powerful, a part and therefore resourced, despite obvious abuses and their main role as 'rent-a-crowd'. On the other hand they are sceptical of left institutions of the more conventional type, of political undertones and party agendas. What they have taken from demarcation as a political forbearer and a possible kind of a political constitution is that political infighting and agendas are often secret and lethal and that action, however noble, can be completely undermined by the illegitimacy of group dynamics[87].

They too are caught up in the political rhetoric of governmentality and pseudo-developmental jargon, trapped in a juggle of words and no action. The CBO draft constitution takes a form that seems remarkably routinised, as if they were reading off a government department agenda. These words, seemingly detached from the realities of what they require, are echoed in the claims to titles, in their insistence on registration. All of these are steps that they imagine as legitimately constitutive, as symbolic images of substantial conditioning, of institutionalized stability and security. These are clearly the signs of a group of young people who

87 the role of Mogale toward the end of demarcation, mentioned in the chapter previous, and the role of youth as canon fodder for the 'revolution' are perhaps most stark in their minds. The post demarcation jostling for political positions is also an issue. But there are other MDF political scandals and tragedies too.

know what they don't want but lack the confidence to go it alone, know they are way out of their depth, but also feel it's their only option.

By comparison Bonang has a very different background and has chosen a very different future, though she responds to a similar disaffection with party politics. She is a slight young woman with a confident walk and a big voice. I had been told by a few people that I needed to talk to her, that "she knows about these politics things". Eventually I had arranged to meet with her through a local group of hip-hop enthusiasts, they know her because she used to be part of the Khut (pronounced cut) twelve, a selection of individual emcees and rappers who had produced a mixtape together a few years back. We met at the entrance to her family home, across the road from club Sedibeng and maybe 20 meters from the stadium. She was hanging over the wire fence having a conversation with another woman in the road. As two girl children walked past and called out her name, she waved and smiled back.

As we walked towards the back yard of her home, she told me that the girls had been part of a talent contest that she had adjudicated a few days prior. She explained to me that a lot of the people in the community call on her to be part of the things they are doing, they like to include her because they know her heart is with the community. We sat down on an old bench in the concreted back yard and she turned to me and said, "what exactly do you want to talk to me about? Because I don't want to talk about politics".

I was taken aback. She had already agreed to the interview so this wasn't quite what I expected. I also wasn't entirely clear on who she was because when I had pressed people who suggested I speak to her, they always just said she knows a lot about politics. I figured my best bet was not to talk about politics if she was that clear about it. I suggested we start with where she was born and went to school, as that was generally how I had started most of the other interviews.

The interview shifted from interview format to more like a conversation. Partly because I was a little stumped on what to talk to her about while still respecting her wishes to avoid politics, but even more so because Bonang constantly counter interviewed me – when I asked her where she had grown up, she would ask the same of me, and so it continued on, much more like a conversation. She also explained that she felt she was "becoming a philosopher", stating a new found penchant for philosophizing about things around her and her life. She explained that she had grown up in Khutsong, attending school at Nayabuswa for primary school and then Tsoasongo until matric, after which she had done numerous courses in various things including ambulance assistance, labour law at Damelin College, Safety auditing technology at Vaal University of Technology, Newsletter Production at Khanya College and call centre and marketing consultancy most recently.

She had had to stop the marketing course, which she had undertaken in a nearby town called Klerksdorp – residing there while studying, after getting very sick. She had in fact collapsed on returning from Pearl's funeral. She had a heart ailment that doctors were struggling to treat, resulting in her being bed ridden for a few months. In her desperation, she turned to church,

> It was 27 April, it was a holiday[88] - I was sick yho, and then my mother told me you know. "I'm taking you to the Zionist Christian Church and I was like Hell no! Hell no! [laughs]. You know there's this misconception about that church [that] when you attend that church your life is fucked up or whatever you know …ja it was so embarrassing. I thought people would hear I was going to that church [and say] "wow what happened?" You know this gossip and stuff. I let it go. First day I went, funny enough, I got interested for a while. You know it's a very interesting place.

88 The 27th of April is an annual national public holiday. Now called freedom day, it marks the start date of the first universal suffrage national elections in South Africa in 1994, that resulted in the election of Nelson R. Mandela as the first democratically elected president.

The Zionist Christian Church (ZCC) is a vernacular church that fuses African traditions and forms of Christianity (Comaroff 1985). The ZCC is considered quite conservative; women are expected to cover their hair, wear long skirts, not wear nail polish or make up and attendees are not permitted to consume alcohol. Bonang as a seemingly outspoken, independent and relatively modernized young women is thus not the quintessential stereotype of a ZCC congregate.

> It is very boring, make no mistake, the people are very boring, they're dull. It's interesting because at the end of the day, ever since I went to ZCC I haven't gone to the doctor, like, its, I don't know, its unexplainable. Nje, it just fascinates me. It's out there, it's happening. Something is happening [laughs].

Bonang seems reluctant to make conventional claims to miracles or "God's work" and is somewhat shy of the choice she has made, and in particular its penchant for conservativism. She makes it quite clear however that she still dresses in jeans when she is not in the church and is currently not willing to make a full commitment to the expectation of the church, choosing to attend somewhat independently, saying "it's not that it's my church like I am an official member, it's just that I go, I pray there". She does however hope to get to that point eventually, she just needs to "figure out whether this is the right things for me, am I taking the right road, ja". Her family does not attend the church, she goes there alone. When I asked if she had friends in the church she said emphatically,

> Hell no! I don't like friends; they've always got something to say. I do have friends but I don't have time for friends[89], I don't have time honestly. But I have people that… [she knows and are part of a broader community of associates]…you know that ZCC guys are

89 "I don't have time for" is a colloquialism that refers to not having an inclination toward wasting time on a particular thing, rather than a direct sense of the actual time available to the speaker.

> very,,,they like women, yho! yho! yho! They like women! They make funny comments. These women they like it when guys [say] “hey, what what what what” ja, so they’re there. I think that’s another reason I don’t want to have friends in church because I might forget what brought me there and just go with the flow.

Bonang seemed quite self reflective about her choices and her reasons for making those choices. There is a sense that she is perhaps weary of commitment or becoming too deeply involved, choosing rather to remain guarded, perhaps even isolated somewhat from what she does and who she meets. This is somewhat counter to the initial sense one gets of her, as a well known, well liked member of the community who is open and friendly and rather outgoing. There also seems to be something quite hard edged about her, despite the rather non-political discussion, certain ideological points slipped through. For instance, Bonang explained that one of the reasons she liked the ZCC was that “in [her] opinion, black people were scattered when white people arrived and because [they were not united] the church took advantage of that”, the ZCC church is somewhat of a compromise that retains some of the African tenets she finds important, “I am a very cultural person, I like connecting with everything”.

She also stated “I want to know why aren’t [other people] interested, most of the time mina, I like to explore. I am a very adventurous person”. This, she says, is how she got involved in hip-hop, becoming the “first queen of hip-hop in Khutsong”, because she saw it as a subculture that existed outside of the mainstream. She also enjoyed expressing herself and her ideas, and found rap to be an able tool. She was however, no longer very involved in the hip-hop scene.

> I don’t really like it much but I can club. Just not locally. Mhm, if I enter there [pointing towards Club Sedibeng down the road] people are staring, “is that you? What are you doing here? This is not your place” I don’t know, they’ve painted this picture about me

When probed on what this picture could be Bonang exclaimed she didn't know, "maybe just the way I live". Eventually she relented, somewhat. She, quite sweepingly said she had been very involved in the struggle as leadership in the MDF, that's how she had become involved with Khanya College, they had assisted the MDF quite a lot. She did not however, explain her exact role;

> I was too deep, to the extent that my mother would get scared. When the whole struggle started of demarcation, I was still in High School, so I was a member of Cosas, I like debating you know so that's where it [political involvement] started, first at school [then] we brought it to the community… it got very bad to the extent that I was followed at some point. When we differ ideologically, people take your views as personal attacks to themselves. That's where everything [that went wrong] started and then…

Bonang went on to list the difficulties Khutsong faces and how community structures still had "a long way to go". She listed lack of education, high rates of HIV/Aids. She stated it was important to address the needs of the 'proletariat', to 'challenge the owners of the means of production'. In reference to teenage pregnancy she suggested that she wasn't sure what more could be done stating "it's not that I condone it, but I live with it". Bonang was definitely disappointed, perhaps even angered by something; but also strikingly politically educated, seemingly disenchanted with politics and had thus chosen to exit herself from it.

At least to an extent; as she and a number of friends were developing a local radio station, something she stated was "very important for the community". They were struggling somewhat with resources and finances, but they had the certificate that gave them rights to the radio wave. She explained that the major focus of the radio station was education and information services, and they were very hopeful that it would come together soon. Bonang has been unemployed

and not studying since her illness and thus the radio station was her major project, as long as they could get the resources together, she said “im not complaining, its fine. At some point it’s going to work”.

Bonang seemed to be juggling various, sometimes contradictory identities. She claimed not to be political, but clearly had very particular stances on her community and her ideas and stood firmly in the community as a leader of some form. She had chosen to distance herself from attempting change in her community, resigning herself to the harsh realities of what Khutsong was, but concurrently was making headway in a very ambitious project of a local radio station that would have clear political implications for community education, voice and representation. She had chosen to be part of a very conservative church, but remained somewhat outside of the institutionalized status quo retaining her very independent and outspoken non-conservativeness. She seemed, somewhat, not quite one or the other, juggling a midpoint that made sense to her. When asked how she made sense of it all, she said quite simply

> They don’t have to make sense. They just have to happen. They don’t have to make sense honestly. Each and everything has got its own time… remember I am going to become a philosopher.

Bonang, it turns out, was the deputy secretary of the Young Communist League local branch[90], leadership with Jabu and Musa. She was also the secretary of the Merafong Demarcation Forum - and thus at the forefront of anti-demarcation politics, and more significantly, political strategizing (and not just critical mass as many young people had become). Her training at Khanya College[91] had been

90 This information is freely available on the internet where some basic clues to Bonang’s political background can be found, including a published poem entitled “Feminist”.

91 Khanya College was established in 1986 and currently posits its primary aim of Khanya College is to “assist various constituencies within working class and poor communities to respond to the challenges posed by the forces of economic and political globalisation” (Khanya Website). This is somewhat different to its initial function which worked much closer to workers organisations with workers issues under apartheid and in early transitions period. However it, like many like it, has clearly shifted its focus to align with international issues of

due to her role in the demarcation protests; there she had been trained in various things including newsletter production – the basics of putting together a newsletter. She together with Musa in particular became the youth face of the MDF and was very much involved in inner workings and negotiations with government and other party structures. Bonang's face appears in a number of the photographs taken by journalists at the constitutional court and at the march on the Union Buildings, usually on a phone or speaking to officials, always seemingly in an organizing role.

Initially on obtaining this information I was disappointed that I had been unprepared for the interview and felt I had missed out on really vital information. However I also knew that the inner intricacies of demarcation and the politics that took place within the ANC were not at the core of what I was interested in, but rather how ordinary young people had come to figure their politics in its midst. It was therefore vital that Bonang, a major figure in the demarcation struggle had chosen to speak to me about church and friends and other such ordinary things, rather than politics.

Clearly her role as a leader of the demarcation protests was why her community responded to her as someone they knew and trusted and felt closely connected with. I would assume her ideological choices, those that had resulted in her major differences and eventual severance with the MDF and politics more broadly, partly affords her deeper respect, in a way no longer afforded to Jomo Mogale, Musa or Jabu. Choosing to disengage, refusing to speak of it, is in some ways a reclaiming of a normativity that politics and the pain it caused her, had taken from her.

Her turn to church is clearly influenced by her illness and her needs to manage it. However it is also emblematic, as a space of passivism, conservativism and

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greater popularity (such as globalisation). Khanya also used to house a school that taught substantial courses in politics and the like, however as epitomised by Bonang's 'newsletter production course' their focus , has shifted too – this is partly due to funding restructuring.

perhaps even escapism, that affords her an alternative institution to politics from which she wishes to retreat. However whilst engaging in an institutionalized alternative she remains on its edges, actively avoiding full immersion in its traditions, framework and language, remaining somewhat independent of it, refusing to be consumed by it. This it would seem, is a self reflective need to consider more carefully the commitments she makes to institutionalized or 'full stream ideological' tenets and their adherents.

Her reiteration that she 'is becoming a philosopher' also hints at a sense of self reflective and cautious consideration of the world about her. This may be a response to the radicalism and hot temperedness of the rage and frustration felt and enacted during demarcation, it may also be somewhat of resigning to a current reality not easily beaten, despite ones deep convictions, despite commitment, despite mass action; as she says – "it's not that I condone it, but I live with it".

This is not to say she has lost her radicalism completely, or her need to make inroads into the challenges faced by her community. I would be wary of claiming that politics was too hot for her, that she has been beaten. Rather, Bonang is choosing to make different kinds of decisions. While she comments on the fear of being judged for attending so conservative a church, I wonder if this is not in its own way a radical stance, not much different from the kind of person projected through the 'picture' people had of her as a community leader. It may be seen as radical in the sense of Zionism historical referenceing as a response to the 'dilemmas of marginalization: poverty, migrant labor, lack of a political voice, and changing marital and family relationships' (Berger 1986, 11) during the colonial era in South Africa as argued by Comaroff (1985), in which the ZCC is a form of systems and imagined belongings that act as a "coded means by which "purposive actors" manipulate and address the world around them" (Berger 1986, 11). This is not a form of escapism or apolitical avoidance (Comaroff 1985) but rather an attempt at attributing religiously-based systems of meaning that

maintain a sense of identity and belonging that acts in direct reaction to the norms imposed by the state. While perhaps not combative, it is certainly reactive and in this way political.

But I think it goes a step further and somewhat more specific to a contemporary mode, and that particular to youth. In refraining from alcohol and makeup, even if not wholly, Bonang extracts herself from many of the acts by young people that she describes as consequences of an under-resourced reality, rather she embodies what she refers to as the “natural” – outside of the commercial pressures and rampant social demons she sees in her community. She remains moved by the issues her communities face and speaks rapidly and strongly when conversation turns to such issues, clearly practiced but also passionate. And the plans for the radio station are definitely a part of this, perhaps another approach – less institutionalized, defined less by broader politics and more by the immediate community, determined through a practical application that has the potential for tangible influence. But she remains cautious, saying ” At some point it’s going to work” and reiterating a few times in the interview “each and everything has got its own time”.

The Khutsong Youth Friendly Service (KYFS) is a youth run organization that runs health education programs in the primary and high schools in Khutsong. Definitively part of the Youth Friendly Service programme that is found throughout the west rand, the Khutsong Youth Friendly Service volunteers were initially trained through governmental health department programmes that sought to provide a service that acted as a bridge between young people and the ordinary services of the clinic. This is because clinics had become known for being hostile to young people, particularly those with pregnancy, STDs or other such sexual issues resulting in young people increasingly not accessing basic health care available to them.

Currently a group of seventeen volunteers works through every school in the township spread across the week, resulting in at least one intervention per day for the volunteer group; each class meeting with a pair once a week. A pair of volunteers sits with a group and discusses various issues specific to their age group. This is done in a colloquial fashion, and is supposed to be an open discussion forum where people are safe to speak about whatever is on their minds. Because they started off within the health sector, the main premise of their discussions is health based – hygiene and nutrition etc with primary schools; STDs, HIV/Aids, pregnancy and abortion and drug/alcohol abuse with high schools. However, often their discussion shift into far broader issues such as food security, child headed households, peer rape, various levels of prostitution and transactional sex as well as rampant abuse – emotional, physical and sexual.

Paseka and Pitso established the Khutsong Youth Friendly Service in early 2006. A very difficult process, they sought assistance from governmental structures, nongovernmental organizations and private institutions – this included the local home based care programme which was partly funded by AngloGold, a local social worker, the Department of Health and the Department of Social Development both nationally and provincially as well as LoveLife, a youth focused NGO. All these have assisted them to differing degrees over the past years and often their training and funding is intermittent and over short term contracts. Paseka mentions briefly the difficulties of maintaining programmes, through weakened financial structures and under resourced training. He struggles with the lack of support from broader structures from which they might draw for particular cases that are brought to their attention. He mentions a primary school girl of 8, a learner in one of the classes he works in, who is physically abused by her uncle whom she lives with. Paseka, as part of an informal organization with no certified training and no particular authority or powers, has had to rely on local social workers who he says simply return the girl home each time he brings her to the clinic badly bruised.

Pitso explains that their relations with the clinic are tense, that effectively they are no longer a youth friendly service because they have been evicted from the clinic. The youth friendly service programme, initially funded by the department of health, lost funding some years ago and is thus no longer a formalized clinic structure. Though many clinics have retained the service, which is done on a volunteer basis throughout, Khutsong clinic does not really have on site space for them and requested that they find offsite offices. They currently share space with a local HIV/Aids support group in a prefab very far from the clinic, however whenever members of the support group enter, they have to leave for purposes of confidentiality – and because the support group is really doing them a favour.

This can be very frustrating for the volunteers, who have no space from which to work and little support considering the difficult situations they are told or faced with and the emotional burdens they carry. Because the funding is intermittent, volunteers often don't even receive their monthly stipend and often will leave at the first chance of receiving a job, having taken part in the programme as a way of preoccupying themselves during unemployment with something contributive and productive. Many of those who are employed are in fact taken up by governmental structures and social development programmes because they are experienced and have often accessed some training through LoveLife effectively making them apt for employment. When I asked if this didn't result in the loss of their most productive, most dedicated and most skilled volunteers – skilled in order to deepen the services of the organization – to the very organizations that were meant to be supporting them, they said "unfortunately, but what can we do but be happy for them when they are given the opportunity to receive a paycheque".

Croz, a local hip hop fundi and one of the volunteers on the programme explains that he really enjoys what he does, but above all would like to be able to make a monetary contribution to his family and build a career. Croz had in fact newly

returned to the programme, as he had left on finding a job but after the end of his contract a year later, had returned. Despite this Croz, and Pitso and Paseka particularly are possibly the most positive people I had come across of all the people I had spoken to in Khutsong – they believe in what they are doing, believe it's making a difference and are committed to continuing with it despite the difficulties.

In fact their biggest challenge they say, is 'youth out of school' – the group of people who sit on the corners every day, not easily accessible in classes or part of other programmes, these young people are most difficult to access and at highest risk. Their strategy to handle this is 'hot spot interventions', guerrilla education programmes that they launch at the 'hot spots' where these young people are. They seek out their target audience, and take the education to them, using similar techniques of informal chat sessions and information packed discussions.

Different to the strategy of the CBO, KYFS is project oriented and the formalized constitution of its members is secondary. Their independence is less a political or ideological choice than an enforced reality after having doors closed time and time again. Nonetheless they too have chosen to go it alone, use their independence to their advantage. They have gained rapport among the schools they work in, garnering support from the teachers and many parents, eventually setting up an advisory board of community leaders such as the owner of the supermarket and the excel, local principles and Buti Kulwane – who had been a social worker in Khutsong, now moved on but still involved. Somewhat like Bonang, KYFS retains a community respect and influence. Also like her they are somewhat resigned to the difficulties with a sense that as long as they continue, 'everything has its time'.

All of these young people are windows into the many people attempting to get on with their lives. Many are not involved in their communities, have slightly more

individualized objectives such as Bafana who is more focused on his career. Many others like Bongani are far more negative, far more despondent, not involved in anything in particular. Others have retained political objectives, remaining within political structures and paving new ways forward within them. But there is no doubt that demarcation is over and the lessons from it have been learned. That people are looking for something else now, are shifting their political frameworks, adjusting their political applications and redefining the objects of their energies.

Something about four years of ongoing protest and destruction was simply not sustainable. Has taken its toll on young lives. It would seem young people, in the aftermath of the anti-demarcation protests, have come to seek new forms of belonging. These forms are not the same across the board, some more politically ideological than others, some more productive than others, some more religious than others. However those in the windows above, retain a few similarities that are all political in the same way. They all share a deep mistrust of institutionalization, a kind of control or ownership by either elders or systems – whether of politics, of new social movements, of political parties or forums, of churches, of clinics, of philanthropy. All of them then, have sought ‘go it alone’ strategies, ways of continuing, retaining what they can, attempting to address what they see around them. Most of all, each attempts an interaction with the world around them that exists within a cognitive paradigm of the everyday, the doable, the ordinary. In every case, the extraordinary and spectacular claims on citizenship, voice and democracy on a scale that represented an idea much larger than the space Khutsong actually occupied; have been replaced with far more cautious, more modest ways forward. In each case, there is a sense that many young people have not yet given up on their place of legitimized belonging in the world, their possibilities of contributive economy, but that in most cases, young people have moved on, are seeking more ordinary spaces of being.

Many youth in Khutsong today are still driven by a need to uplift their communities and drive a developmental agenda. What it would seem by the examples above is that many young people are in a complex negotiation with the forms of community action and self determination and political agency available to them. If we take as given the fact that the broad majority of youth were involved in the demarcation protests in some or other way, then we might assume that these forms of continued praxis can be read in direct relation to the forms evident in demarcation and that these forms in their similarities and distinct differences are drawn from the experiences, gains and losses of the demarcation era.

While some, it would seem, are caught in the quagmire of institutionalization, conventional political speak and what seems to be a crippling politicking that results in complete inaction, others have looked to wider source of inspiration and collective functioning that exist in alternative institutions or self made institutions and even then, usually on the edges of the formalized in either case.

This is not to assume that all young people in Khutsong have developed collective attempts and community upliftment or peer to peer productivity. Many, perhaps even most, are situated within an individualized more conventional labour centred paradigm that, like Bafana or Bongani may or may not afford viable employment opportunities. A few others are involved in conventional politics of the party type – ANCYL, YCL etc.

But for those who have looked to self-determined forms of collective identity and agency, there is a certain kind of politics at play. While church, youth choirs and peer education groups may seem less political than the CBO which has overtly political undertones, in the level of independence these young people continue to put forward, whether more by lip service in the case of the CBO or by clear practical enactment in the case of KYFS, there is a kind of politics that aims for the possibilities of a ‘better’ existence. This kind of politics could perhaps be

drawn from demarcation, Khutsong has been referred to as a “Do-It-Yourself” (Philp, 2009) kind of place. In many ways it maintains the sense of self-driven claims to agency, action and belonging that were at the centre of the anti-demarcation protests. Too, it takes the form of *not quite*, a certain kind of scepticism of the centre and the periphery, this dance of non-binary relations that result in an incomplete commitment. But this kind if politics, it seems, is also in opposition to demarcation, is weary of the all encompassing, all engulfing and eventually all disappointing politics that demarcation became, it remains on modest scales of the personal, sometimes even intimate. It remains within the confines of the trusted, and in the case of the CBO is set on trust to such an extent that it loses it completely. It maintains a local significance that is obtainable, that can “happen in its own time” rather than the passionate calls for change and democracy now! that epitomised the demarcation period.

conclusion: the shadow of appearance

This research begins with the assumption that youth politics has not simply disappeared, or been buried under the weight of crime and HIV/AIDS, but rather exists in formations and spaces, perhaps not conventional in their makeup but nonetheless very relevant – that need to be carefully considered if we are to understand the complexity of the political subjectivities of post-1994 South Africa.

This dissertation aims to figure the conditions under which youth came to understand, embody and legitimise their politics in an arena of post-1994 social circumstance. To understand the framework under which youth attempt to figure their belonging and their agency, we must come to understand our contemporary social forms and what slight possibilities exist for political action.

It is clear from the circumstances charted in this dissertation that the particular condition for youth to attempt to change or influence their surrounds and circumstances are extraordinarily difficult. And that the frames under which their politics is defined from the outside, is equally challenging. But as is clear in a number of instances throughout this dissertation, the actual arena is perhaps not more difficult than it was pre-1994, and the negative labels it garners are not dissimilar. Youth political actors pre-1994 certainly had more to fear in terms of retaining their lives, the danger their families would face, the likelihood of torture and indefinite and extended detention without trial.

How then do we come to understand the challenges of youth political action today, why does it seem that youth have lost the vigour of their predecessors, have become comfortable in a democratic dispensations despite the continued inequalities and lives lived in dire poverty? What is clear throughout this dissertation is that many young people are still vitally engaged in a project of improving their own circumstances, and the circumstances of those around them.

There is an uncanny sense that young people, self identified as political or not, are invested in the possibilities of contribution to their environment (Hayem, 2011), are situated in a structure of *obligation* that defines the ways in which people relate with one another.

For young people, in relation to their state, in relation to family, in relation to employers and major capital, in relation to memory and heritage, obligation is an automatic sense of the plurality of political relations. *Obligation* insinuates a social tie between multiples that implies a kind of equality that suggests all must get and give, regardless of position and power. Clearly this sense of equality does not denote sameness, in the sense of having or not having wealth, power, influence, ability, but rather a kind of social contract that regards people relationally in a similar space of *obligation*. This *obligation* is not individual, though it may begin at individual gain, rather its broader intention is for a wider social contribution that's networks outlive the initial act of reciprocity - an employee gives one person a good job, that person pays for his brother's university education, his brother becomes a contributive member of society etc.

By definition, the space of *obligation* might be comparable to Arendt's proposition of the *polis* and constitutively, of politics. A space of plurality, not of a physical location but rather "it is the organisation of the people as it arises out of acting and speaking together, and its true space lies between people living together for this purpose, no matter where they happen to be" (1958, 198). The polis exists only because people act and speak in relation to one another, for the purpose primarily of plurality and the means which it provides. *Obligation* then, is the condition under which a polis might be formed.If we are to unpack this we must consider action, plurality and appearance. Action for Arendt is the core constitutive condition for humanity, and is the very condition under which plurality occurs. Arendtian action differs from labour for example, because its constitutive form is in relation to others, whereas labour's primary purpose is the self (survival). Action is the human capability of socially oriented 'doing', but further it

is the ‘doing’ for the sake of the socially oriented. It is at this point that action becomes political. While human beings are capable of kinds of activity, not all are action. She differentiates between ‘fabrication’ and ‘action’. Action is particular to individuals of equal high-standing, through speech and action, bringing forth (or disclosing) their individual selves as part of a plurality for the cause of that plurality. She states;

> This revelatory quality of speech and action comes to the fore where people are *with* others and neither for nor against them – that is, in sheer human togetherness… without the disclosure of the agent in the act [of speech], action loses its specific character and becomes one form of achievement among others. It is indeed no less a means to an end than making is a means to produce an object [fabrication]. This happens wherever human togetherness is lost… in these instances action has lost the quality through which it transcends mere productive activity (Arendt 1958, 180)

Additionally in order for the socially oriented to be constitutive, action must “appear” in a socially specified space. “Action not only has the most intimate relationship to the public part of the world common to us all, but is the one activity which constitutes it” (Arendt 1958, 198). The space of appearance is “where I appear to others as others appear to me, where men exist not merely like other living or inanimate things, but to *make their appearance explicitly* (Arendt 1958, 198, my own emphasis). *Obligation* is then a kind of socially constitutive action, perhaps not in the form of doing actively but in being obligated to do. *Obligation* then might be considered political.

In fact we can perhaps draw the most direct correlations between the polis and the demarcation protests. Arendt herself makes explanation of action through multiple revolutionary acts and popular uprisings including the Russian revolution, French resistance to Hitler and the Hungarian revolt of 1956. It is in

these acts of resistance, that action is performed in the plural, and 'appeared' in the public, and constitutes the political. Demarcation was perhaps first and foremost an action of appearance, what Arendt terms as "to make their appearance explicitly". Demarcation took as it core point of departure, the show of action, in as plural a form as possible (in terms of the mass) and in as 'appeared' a form as possible. Action was defined largely by its wholly public form; action was embodied in the mass of protesting bodies in the open air, expressing their deed and speech in highly public platforms (the burning of public buildings for example). Furthermore, the very act of speech, and the plural recognition of action, and the recognition of equal standing of speech and deed was the core reasoning behind the demarcation protest. Demarcation protests were the demand for recognition of voice and action from others. If as Arendt states, the political exists only in actions of the polis, and the polis exists "wherever men are together in the manner of speech and action" (1958, 198) for the purpose of the common (in that appearance constitutes reality (1958,50)) then the demarcation protest was in its form the *polis*, the space of appearance. It was undeniably an act of the political.

But of course, Arendt defines one specifically problematic frame for which the polis is denied to the many, regardless of their responses to *obligation*, to plurality, to the space of appearance. Fabrication or 'labour and work' are the conditions under which certain humans are denied the ability of action, and therefore denied the ability of the political. For labour and work are actions by which human beings become tied to the remedy of their livelihoods, are engaged in practice of maintaining self-focused life first and foremost, rather than plurality. "Although all men are capable of deed and word, most of them – like the slave, the foreigner, and the barbarian in antiquity, like the labourer or craftsman prior to the modern age, the jobholder or businessman in our world – do not live in [the polis]" (1958, 199). This exclusory condition might then, for Arendt, disqualify *obligation*, and demarcation protest from the polis, denying them the qualification of the political.

The argument for what constitutes political action is therefore fully binary for Arendt; those who struggle for survival cannot engage in issues of 'contemplation' (Arendt 1958) or 'theory'. Those who have been brought together in the same place through labour activity or to voice disaffection are same but not equal, speak for individual purpose but are not actualised or disclosed as individuals (Arendt 1958). Whether demarcation therefore is disqualified from being a part of the polis is however not a question here, for what is perhaps more important is how young people in Khutsong have come to perceive it themselves, and how they respond to an environment that perhaps does not fit into the neat binaries of Arendtian theory.

If we are to put aside for one moment, the possible disqualification of demarcation protest from the polis (for the argument that demarcation was in theory, much more than an issue of survival still stands), we would still need to consider the duration that the demarcation protests remained as a part of the polis. Arendt states that "what first undermines and then kills political communities is loss of power and final impotence; and power cannot be stored up and kept in reserve for emergencies, but exists only in its actualization… springs up between men when they act together and vanishes the moment they disperse" (1958,200). For when the polis is not actualized, not engaged plurally, not embodied in word and deed – effectively when the protest is disbanded and everyone decides its over – the political is lost, and so is its power. There is no doubt, in the aftermath of demarcation, that the disassembling of the polis has left Khutsong somewhat empty, its body no longer possessed, its words run silent.

The space of appearance no longer really exists in Khutsong, except for a meeting in the stadium every now and again, and even then it is there only potentially, not actualized, not actioned. There is a sense that, in the aftermath of demarcation people have receded, have returned to their private spaces. And

there, according to Arendt, there is no politics. The polis is, unquestionably, plural and appeared.

But perhaps what Khutsong, and youth responses in it, indicate is that Arendt's grand politics of plurality and appearance is a failure. For in the shadow of a most spectacular instance of the polis, of an ongoing and highly plural phase of Arendtian 'freedom' and appearance, young people have become disillusioned with the possibilities of conventional political action. Effectively they have become disillusioned with the polis.

This disillusionment is partly in the fact of the passing away of its power with its dispersal, or the dispersal of its constituents. There is certainly the sense that, though surely one of the longest standing instances of appearance in contemporary South African protest post-1994, this coming together to constitute the polis was not sustainable. It was destructive, and unproductive, it disturbed livelihoods, and schooling and homes. While necessary, and perhaps inevitable, it was impossible to continue that way.

Many have mentioned the one-ness, the power of the masses, the singular objective and the sense of political formation this produces, and there is certainly a sense that that is missed. But its abrupt end is not its ultimate disappointment, for it was clearly not sustainable. What is perhaps worse is that in its ending, there have been immediate and slightly delayed indications that the grandiose, the plural, the appeared, often due to its ultimately public nature, hides many private holes. Much of its actualisation is unreliable. Much of this unreliability is the sheer spectacularness – its publicness, its pluralness and the vagueness, opaqueness that this kind of appearance is really made of. I think youth's ultimate disappointment with appearance is the difficulty with which they are able to start anew or even maintain what they had become or even 'carry on', re-become 'normal'.

For young people after demarcation, the question of what constitutes political action becomes far more complex. For Arendtian action has had problematic results, as appearance and notions of individualised disclosure have resulted in negatives more than positives. Though returned to Gauteng, the conditions for action have lessened; the likelihood of its success is minimal. Young people in Khutsong are asking the question of whether action, rather than productive activity or fabrication, can really be seen as higher up on the telos of the human condition.

For in the aftermath of demarcation as appearance lay two strands of lifehood, either a lot of no-things, or a twisted and complex negotiation of new-things. The simplest example of this is the young protestors who were 'left' in jail after demarcation had ended, and the disinterest from much of the leadership of the MDF in getting them out. These young prisoners, the leftovers in the aftermath of appearance, were probably the singular most devastating issue for young people to come to terms with as the smoke rose and Jomo Mogale went back to teaching in the high school he had once somewhat supported burning. Eventually, a number of elderly members of the MDF women's league, led by Pearl Khanyile before she died, did manage to get them released, but the rose tint was already gone.

Other forms of what is left in the shadow of demarcation are perhaps a little more difficult to pin down. But we see the nothingness in young people remaining on the corners, waiting and wanting work. We see the attempts at legitimation and belonging that Bafana invests in the possibilities of getting a good job. Dumisani too, seeks legitimacy in work, in the 'straight and narrow'. He is an indication of the ways in which the demands of demarcation remain in the 'small things', and this makes clear the extent to which, in fact, the demand for obligatory relations with the state was not necessarily met, despite having been returned to Gauteng. Palesa and Karabo remain unemployed, remain waiting, despite a wholehearted engagement in action and appearance, in part a re-enactment of a historical form

of appearance (wholly unArendtian), and perhaps a re-enactment too of its failures.

Musa and Jabu are perhaps the strongest example of ‘new-things’, as their lives have changed immensely from the act of appearance. Yet these new things are deeply conflictual, as these two young people are forced to recognise the grey areas and hypocrisies that are run of the mill parts of a conventional politics of appearance. The CBO too has taken on new things as they move out of the demarcation period. However they struggle with the formalization of political organisation, the principles that appearance institutes. They are sceptical of the ways in which political parties and party loyalties interfere with the formations of the polis. They have become paranoid of the inner workings of the polis.

Bonang has moved completely away from the confines of what is constituted as the polis, and in particular of appearance. She has retreated back from the party politics she was once so much a part of, withdrawn from the polis as a space of inauthentic performativity. She has become sceptical of the kinds of politics at work in the polis, the types of words in particular and how they often mismatch the deeds. Bonang maintains that the issues she faces on the ground, issues of survival, far outweigh the games that are played in the space of appearance. Like her, KYFS is still, regardless of any victory, faced with the ongoing reality of one of the highest rates of HIV infections in the province, the realities of child headed households and ongoing deaths. They, in the shadow of appearance, deal with abuse, teenage pregnancy, malnourished children – all issues that appearance of demarcation never even took on directly.

Perhaps it’s because demarcation was never really the polis, because these people were always going to have to return to labour, to survival. They were not of the Platonic “realm of human affairs… from which everything merely necessary or useful is strictly excluded” (Arendt 1958, 25). Perhaps then it was an attempt at the polis when they in fact had no ‘right’ to be there, that has

resulted in the inability to maintain it, the inability to enable its powers. And ultimately that has resulted in the disaffection with a politics defined by appearance.

Perhaps the conditions of South African space of appearance have in fact made it even more difficult to belong; perhaps they are Arendtian in their frameworks. For so much of South African politics discards those on the edges of survival, ensures they never really play a significant role. Unemployed youth is probably one of the strongest points of this, as there is still no formalised plan to get youth, not in education or employment, into systems of belonging and productivity. At the same time, the frameworks of Neoliberalism, encouraged by the state, government, politics and broader society indicate to young people that they must have money to belong, that they must drive a fancy car in order for the masses to even hear their ideological points of view that they cannot lead if they have nothing material to offer.

Poor young people are faced with frank and uncompromising instances of a state that refuses them access, discards them on the periphery, and is unwilling to hear what they have to say. They are faced continuously, with divisive politics on the party level, and the sense that other than votes, your party has no interest in you or in doing anything for your community. Young people who turn to politics are faced with the banality of protocol, the figuring of politics only in terms of position and procedure, so that they know little else of how to make things happen. Again and again they hit brick walls when attempting to access resources, knowledge, and experience. In the face of this they come to a space of ‘adaptation’, a kind of resignation to the fact that even if one takes an abused child to the social worker, the wave of poverty driven societal ills is unrelenting. The difficulties are insurmountable, and this is a societal reality one simply has to face.

But perhaps then this is the point, that while Arendt may be involved in a project of theorizing who has access to the political and effectively then, who has a right

to make choices, engage their environment, redefine what is around them, determine their belonging, their agency – many young people in Khutsong are quite clear that regardless of whether they theoretically have a right, regardless of whether they are even powerful, they have been, are and will, to whatever degree, play a part in the political. Even when a ‘democratic’ and ‘free’ society keeps black, poor and under resourced young people on the fringes, removes them from the channels of provision, reminds them that their use is only to keep the rich in power, delivers nothing, provides little, affords only a semblance of possibility, of ambition but no way of achieving it; even in the face of utter precarity and the likelihood that it will never change, many young people in Khutsong are quite clear that regardless of whether they socially (according to the rich, the powerful, the government) have a right, regardless of whether they are even powerful, they have been, are and will, to whatever degree, play a part in the political.

For young people in Khutsong are part of an inheritance of demanding a space in the political. And to an extent they have learnt that they can win, that they can demand power and a place, even if they don’t really belong. They have learnt too, that the space of the appearance is perhaps too much of a sacrifice, that appearing when the powers that be will never see you as equals deserving of voice and deed in the polis, can have as many negatives as it does positives.

Their choice then, considering their outsider nature anyway, has been to redefine the political. And in this case to deny it its Arendtian appearance, deny it its plurality, in some cases even deny it any semblance of action. Inaction is most certainly a major pillar of Bafana’s politics, as he juggles the balance between looking for work, studying further but also just plain waiting – refusing to work any work, choosing rather to be inactive than to be involved in work that does not suffice, he has dreams and ambitions that must be met. This is a complete disintegration of Arendtian principles. This is not the case of a man who is able to step above the point of survival due to significant means, and to act and speak in

the place of appearance as a political being. Rather, Bafana denies the immediate essentialism of survival that Arendt assumes, denies the fundamentals of word and deed, takes on her distinction of the individually ambitious and the point of personal belonging that constituted the role that one played in the polis, and turns it on its head.

Dumisani too, looks to work as the point of the political, denying Arendt the exclusory terms under which she defines the polis. He co-opts very public land (in the sense that it is state land and that it is in the most publicly accessible space), appearing on the edges to state his belonging and claim his access to survival. This is not in a plural formation of appearance, but an individualised appearance based purely on the need for survival.

Bonang disappears herself from the public, the plural and the appeared. She removes herself completely from the conventions of the polis and instead moves to the completely private. She adopts religion and an approach to religion that is personal rather than public; she does not wear her religion on her sleeve but rather keeps it relatively hidden. In choosing religion, Bonang makes a claim for self identification and individualised action that would, according to Arendt, only be possible in the polis. Bonang denies this, making clear that her sense of 'freedom', her sense of 'identity' is that of the form Arendt refers to, but that it is formulated in the private and still, is valuable and 'real'.

KYFS as much as Bonang, turns to the realm of the private to define their politics. They, more than any of the other young people mentioned above, are engaged in a project of deed and word; they are young people of action. And yet their action pertains to issues of the *oikia* or home, which for Arendt cannot be a political space. While they act in the plural, while they appear amongst others (in class based discussions for example) their issues are of private ones (such as STDs, and family based abuse) and often they return to the homes of those they deal with to complete their politics. Perhaps even more importantly, though not

labour in the conventional sense (as they are volunteers and therefore their labour does not constitute survival) their action is primarily an act of ensuring survival. Not for themselves, but for the many people they meet. Their action, an action of survival, complicates the simplified binaries that Arendt attempts[92].

A young man known as particularly radical, particularly destructive, a key player in what it might mean to "appear", has described this and motivates for its simplicity. Donald 'tsotsi' Thekiso was wanted on charges of public violence but moved around the township freely because "he has simply lost all fear of the government" (Philp, 2009). He had led the mob that burned down the library and was proud of it. Contemporarily he had become a full time volunteer at a centre for the disabled which he did not see as contradictory, stating "I destroyed the library because the government had to be corrected for a big mistake it made; I help here because these children need help, and there is no one else to help them. Simple" (Philp, 2009).

He says "simple". The relationship between the public and the private is not contradictory, or even a case of one that feeds into the other. A politics of grand appearance may be necessary in some circumstances, but the realities of survival are always at arm's length and these too are not contradictory. The two play their part, simply, in a position of political enquiry and engagement that sees young people forced to respond to their conditions by remaining in this space that does not define boundaries. This is 'simple' because it exists in the space of the *not quite*.

The contemporary conditions under which young people figure their political imaginary have forced them into this *not quite* space. This space is somewhat

92 It is important to mention that the surfacing of the private is not a case of what Arendt refers to as the "rise of the social" (1958, 38) for while it could possibly be defined as "house keeping", the very private nature of individualised homes, and specified lives is not a case of the trend way from deviation, a possibility for conformity, it is very specifically the private and not the social. For a very different discussion on the household and the private in politics and poverty in South Africa see Mosoetsa 2011.

emancipatory, it means that Arendtian forced binaries that leave many out, can be quite complexly denied. Yet at the same time the *not quite* is, to an extent, a safe place – not fully committed. For a commitment under the current conditions would be difficult. Many young political people are quieter, more reserved, more private then their pre1994 predecessors had been. There can be no doubt that this is in part a retreat, a fear of the failure of grander, more public politics. In some ways maybe, this is an admission of defeat, an indication that many young people are unwilling to drive, fire and be radical and revolutionary actors in their political field. If this is the case, the possibilities for strong and stark change are unlikely. As young people throughout the world have chosen to take to the streets in great numbers, to occupy in the most Arendtian form of the plurally appeared, these young people in Khutsong are choosing the exact opposite, working rather in small, confined and personal frames and networks. Perhaps this is regrettable; perhaps young people have been defeated by the sheer enormity of political frameworks of exclusion.The future doesn't seem like it's likely to get better. There are no foreseeable answers to the many challenges young people are dealing with, of unemployment, of resources access, of social problems such as domestic abuse. But these forms of politics are attempts, and they should be recognised as such, and recognised as brave steps in an ungenerous environment. If anything, my research in Khutsong has made me less optimistic than when I started out, more attuned to the vast fields of lack that so many young people find themselves standing in, largely alone. But at the same time I'm aware that many occupiers of these spaces are more nuanced than I am, approach their future with greater flexibility, broader prospects of how to make it work. Here we have evidence of a mode of politics that cuts across Arendtian categories but shows young South Africans as astute readers of and responders to the social and political realities in which they live. Many young people deny the blatant frameworks of banality, bifurcation and mediocrity. Many of these young people have come to challenge, often is small and slight ways, but with astounding implications, the routine political imaginaries of many, particularly of the powerful.

This is not simply a narrow case of Khutsong. For while demarcation may be fresh in the consciousnesses of the young people of Khutsong, the frames of spectacular appearance and the conditions of the disappointment and disillusionment in its aftermath; are not too dissimilar to those of the anti-apartheid struggle from which we devise many of the standards of normative political action today. These young people echo many others in the country who have come to figure their politics very differently in the shadow of appearance.

addenda: maps

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